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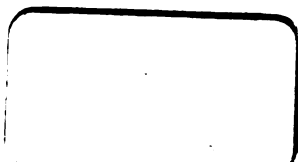
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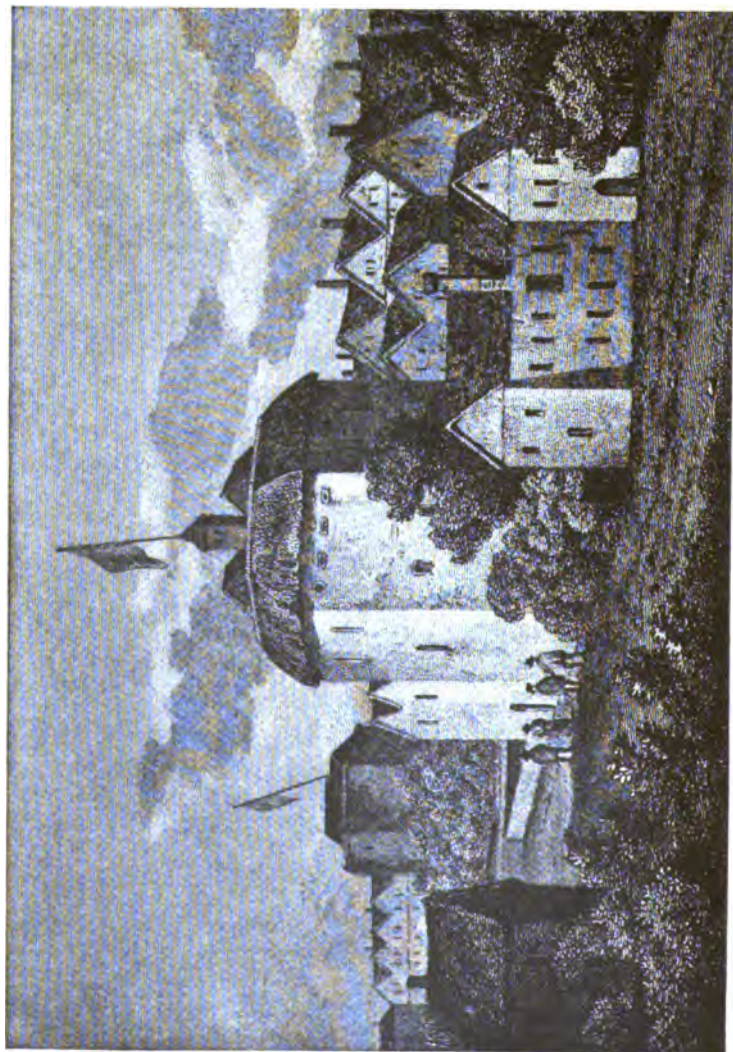


GIFT OF

**GRACE B. DAY, A.B. 1897
IN MEMORY OF HER SISTER
INEZ DAY**







Great Plays

11

(English)

By

Marlowe, Jonson, Fletcher, Sheridan,
Payne, and Browning

With Biographical Notes and a Critical Introduction
by Joseph O'Connor

Illustrated



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THE ENGLISH DRAMA

It is the fashion among critics to trace the origin of the drama back through literary history, to association with religious ceremonies and a source in religious sentiment ; but in studying the development of elaborate dramatic composition and representation they are apt to forget that the true source of dramatic art is a great natural impulse toward feigning passion, character, situation and action, manifest no less in savage than in civilized life, no less in the child than in the man, and to be seen even in the animals that we know best. It is shown in the play of a cat with a captured mouse. You may notice it in a pet dog that coaxes his master to go through some little scene of comedy with him, affects to be fierce as part of the fun, and growls or barks in seeming fury in answer to every pretended rebuke, as if he were sustaining a dialogue on the stage. It comes out strongly in girls playing with their dolls, posing as matrons chatting over household matters and discussing the imaginary ailments of their bisque babies. It takes on more pomp and circumstance in the action of boys building a fort of snow, arranging storming parties, assuming the rôles of popular heroes, and carrying on a mimic war. In men and women this dramatic instinct weakens somewhat among the realities of life, but it shapes many of our day-dreams, gives a touch of elegant affectation to some of our social gatherings, and finds its ultimate gratification in the splendid representations of the modern theatre.

It is said that the English drama rose out of the mystery, miracle and morality plays of the Church ; and the statement is true so far as dramatic form is concerned ; but it must be remembered that dramatic spirit was not the consequence but the cause of these plays.

When the Roman Empire failed, the tide of barbarism went over the world like a deluge. The flood subsiding revealed a desolate waste, — the tree uprooted, the temple broken down and smeared with slime, the civic institutions buried in the drift of conquest, and

art and learning swept into oblivion. A few germs of the old civilization remained with the principle of life in them; there was good material in the conquerors; and the Church had come through the flood with unshaken faith; so that a new civilization was possible. It was a slow growth, and in some respects an uncouth one; and it was religion, in the nature of the case, that breathed a soul into it, casting over the ruins of material grandeur, the play of social disorder, and the coarse and savage nature of man, a sense of the spiritual and supernatural. With "another world to plant its engines on" it moved the world around it. The success of the Church looks like a miracle, and most of us assume it to be a proof of a divine mission and divine guidance; but there was withal a great natural opportunity. It was a time to sway, with simple means, simple and savage men, familiar with the idea of divinities behind the storms, the seasons, the woods and hills; and the religious plays were happily chosen among the lighter devices.

The mystery plays, which bore no distinct name in England, dealt with gospel themes, involving the great drama of redemption. In our day the word mystery retains something of its special meaning in one of the devotional exercises of the Catholic church, and it is used for the favourite themes of the old mystery plays, such as the Annunciation, the visit of the Virgin to Saint Elizabeth, the Nativity and the leading incidents in the earthly career of Jesus—constituting the Joyful, the Glorious and the Sorrowful mysteries that are subjects of prayer and meditation in the rosary.

The miracle plays dealt mainly with incidents in the Old Testament, or in the lives of the saints; and they might be considered as analagous to the historical plays in our day, since in them the heroes of the Church figured, and the great forces of good and evil contended on the stage.

The moralities or moral plays were dramas in which abstract qualities were personified and became characters; and virtues, vices and dispositions strode about the stage as individuals, with names significant of their nature. Commonly the devil took a part in these plays; and the vice, a character representing a different sin in different dramas, was an attendant spirit, yet ever active for the annoyance and discomfiture of his master. The clown in the earlier secular plays is considered a survival of the vice in another form.

So far as may be gathered from existing records, it seems that the

mystery and miracle plays were brought to England after the Norman conquest, took the popular favour, and did not pass away until the close of the sixteenth century. The moralities, as separate entertainments, are traced to the middle of the fifteenth century; and they too died out in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

These plays were given originally, it is supposed, under clerical management; but in time, while retaining their religious tone, they became popular entertainments; and they may have been rendered under civic patronage, or by trade guilds, or even by professional actors. The stage was commonly a scaffold set upon four wheels and divided into a lower room where the actors dressed, and a higher room open at the top where they played. And the huge van on which a mystery was represented was wheeled from street to street in a town, to be followed by the next of the series. The costumes were conventional: gilded hair and beards for the saints, hideous masks for the demons, white robes for the blessed souls, black for the damned, and wings for the angels.

In the nature of the case, the people of cities and towns must have been familiar with these performances as well as with mere pageants and masques; and it is plain from the performance of "The Nine Worthies" in "Love's Labour's Lost," and "Pyramus and Thisbe" in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," that even rustics and artisans were given to dramatic ambition and accustomed to attempt dramatic representation: while the introduction of the players in "Hamlet" shows that a theatrical interlude at court or at some great noble's house was a familiar thing. In all probability, therefore, the people of England, late in the sixteenth century, were more familiar with dramatic representation, better skilled in dramatic form, and fonder of dramatic art than ever since. Nothing was needed for the development of the theatre, save freedom in the choice of themes and in method; and when the general authority of the Church was challenged and overthrown, the English drama rose suddenly in the fullness of power and glory. No longer a handmaid of religion, it stepped forth as a tenth muse, humming love ditties like Erato, as light of foot and lithe of form as Terpsichore, as familiar with court and camp and battle-field as Clio, as full of wit and laughter as Thalia, and as much at home in strong passion and heroic suffering as Melpomene. Dramatic literature came with a sudden rush, gathering strength from all sources, full of life, light, love and power

— no theme too noble or too base, no philosophy too subtle, no sentiment too tender, no passion too fierce, no jest too coarse for it.

The earliest regular English comedy was "Ralph Roister Doister," by Nicholas Udall, master at Eton; and it was printed in 1551. It must be described as a crude and clumsy performance. The first regular English tragedy was "Gorboduc," acted before Queen Elizabeth at Whitehall, by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple, January 18, 1562, two years before the birth of Shakespeare. It dealt with a theme in early English history; it was the first dramatic work in blank verse, the measure afterward established in popular favour by Marlowe; and it is in many respects a masterly composition. The authors were Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhorst, and Thomas Norton. The same year a classic tragedy and a comedy from a story in Ariosto were acted in Gray's Inn Hall; and from 1568 to 1580 no fewer than fifty-two plays were presented at court under the superintendence of the master of the revels, wrought out of Italian stories, well-worn classic themes, and incidents related in the old chronicles, some of them the very material that Shakespeare touched and transmuted into literary gold. In 1576, the first regular licensed theatre was opened at Blackfriars in London; and in a few years there were five public theatres in the metropolis, besides various private places where plays might be given; and there were as many as two hundred professional actors in London and its neighbourhood. To appreciate these facts and understand the relative importance of the Elizabethan theatre, we must remember that the metropolis then was no larger than one of our third-class cities now, though it was the capital of a kingdom and the centre of the life of a nation. But the sudden rise of dramatists was even more of a mystery. Within the space of a lifetime came Lyly, Peele, Green, Kyd, Nash, Lodge, Marlowe, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Webster, Ford, Dekker, Middleton, Massinger, Shirley, — to say nothing of Shakespeare, whose plays constitute the richest literary heritage of humanity.

There was much to quicken dramatic genius into activity. The world was astir with interest in commerce, in conquest, and in discovery; and the stage was the great means of bringing the people into touch with the thought of the times. In this respect it was akin to the modern press. Hamlet says, in commending the players to Polonius: "Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?

Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time ; after your death you would better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live." That might be said of the journalists in our day, though, like the players, they are in danger of squandering their influence. It shows how close the actors of old came to the people and all the interests of daily life. The very construction of a theatre brought familiarity between actors and audience. It was built, to take the case of the Globe, in a circular or octagonal form, with a central space, the yard, open to the sky ; and there the common people, the groundlings, stood on the rush-covered earth to witness the performance. There was a gallery round a part of the building, and under it rooms or boxes, where the nobility and gentry sat. The stage was cut off by a curtain, but it was open to gay young fellows, who sat on stools or reclined among the rushes, and smoked or made free and easy comments as the play went on. Sometimes there was a balcony over the stage for convenience in representation ; and the dressing-room of the actors was in the rear. A change of scene was effected by closing the curtains in front, clearing the stage, and putting up a sign-board with the name of the place where the new action was supposed to occur. The performance was given in the afternoon, and a red flag flying from the roof of the theatre was the signal that it was in progress. The Globe Theatre would hold about two thousand people ; and the prices of admission varied from a penny to a shilling, with a shilling or so extra for a choice seat, which amounts may be multiplied by eight, perhaps, to give their purchasing value in our money.

A player, under an act passed in 1571, was required to have a license from a peer of the realm, or "some person of higher degree," or he was liable to be considered a vagabond ; and about 1587 there were, besides three companies of choir-boys, six licensed companies of players, one named after the queen and the others after the noblemen who granted the licenses — the earls of Leicester, Oxford, Sussex, and Worcester, and Lord Howard of Effingham. There were no women in these companies, and the female characters were played by boys, as is shown by various allusions in the early dramatists. The first woman to appear on the professional stage was Margaret Hughes, the mistress of Prince-Rupert, who took part in a performance December 8, 1660. Curiously enough, however, ladies of rank appeared in amateur theatricals from the time of Elizabeth,

and when Milton's "Comus" was performed at Ludlow Castle in 1634, Lady Alice Egerton acted the part of the heroine.

The sudden freedom out of which the glory of the English drama grew, led to its most serious blemish, licentiousness. The actors were not disreputable, but it is fair to assume that few of them were so respectable and prosperous as Shakespeare; many of the dramatists were young scholars, who made a precarious living, and, if their gibes at one another are to be taken seriously, led dissolute lives and frequently fell into want; the audiences, however various in rank and culture, were alike in a certain coarseness of moral fibre and delight in broad jests. As a consequence, few plays of the age of Elizabeth and James are free from vile words, immoral suggestions, or indecent incidents. In the comedies the coarseness of some of the fun is to be pardoned because it is fun; and the filth seems no more out of place than in Aristophanes; but in the tragedies, unlike the pure and majestic dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles, senselessly foul scenes and passages are sometimes brought in to raise a laugh among the groundlings. Shakespeare sins in this way somewhat, and there is a sly, impudent audacity in many of his allusions that carries off a naughty jest, so that the innocent reader is unaware of the double meaning; but his immorality always comes in as humour and for the sake of the humour. He is too fond of fun to hesitate at indelicacy or even indecency, but he shows no love of indecency for its own sake. It was otherwise with some of his contemporaries, who, when other resources failed, were ready to be coarse as a last resort. The tendency to impurity remained after the great qualities of the early drama failed, and at times it became so much of an evil as to lay the stage open to the charge of becoming a source of public corruption. The Puritans, whom the actors had often ridiculed, lost no time, in the era of their ascendancy, in pressing home this charge.

September 2, 1642, at the outbreak of the civil war, the Lords and Commons decreed that "while these sad causes and set times of humiliation do continue, stage plays shall cease and be forborne." October 22, 1647, another decree gave summary powers to magistrates to proceed against players; and February 9, 1648, an ordinance was passed declaring all actors rogues and subject to punishment as rogues, and authorizing the proper authorities to pull down all theatrical fittings, confiscate the money taken at theatrical performances, and fine each person present in the sum of five shillings.

And so for a time the public drama was suppressed. But there were private dramatic representations occasionally; and Will D'Avenant, in 1656, secured the privilege of giving entertainments in music and declamation, which were soon turned into the representation of plays; and when Charles II entered London in triumph, May 29, 1660, the theatres were at once re-opened, and a new dramatic era began.

The closing of the theatres in 1642 marks sharply the end of the first period in English dramatic literature, though, without the temporary suppression of the drama, a change might have come. The first rush of enthusiasm was over; the great dramatic poets had flourished and gone; the old plots had grown familiar by repetition; the fresh characters, hot from the creative imagination, had been often copied, and new characters were hard to find; favourite tricks of expression were growing wearisome; the primitive passions of love, jealousy, ambition, hatred, put to such fierce service in the theatre, were capable of no further variation; classic themes were stage-worn; Italian inspiration, so long potent in English literature, had spent its force; and the resources of Spanish invention had been pilfered and squandered. The actors were better, the stage equipment and scenery were improved, but the glory was gone from the plays.

It might be said that the old drama died in 1642, and that the drama of the Restoration was a new birth. There was something of passion and poetry in it, for Dryden, Otway, and Lee were capable of "brave translunary things"; and there was abundance of wit and humour, for the age was one of polish, sparkle, and repartee; and Congreve, Wycherley, and Farquhar might have held their own in those wit contests at the Mermaid Tavern of which Beaumont said in an epistle to Ben Jonson that it seemed as if each one of the company meant to put his whole soul into a jest. But the civil war had shattered many ideals and left few illusions, little faith and less enthusiasm. Gallantry had superseded love,—and manners had got the better of natural impulses, to some extent. The pastime of intrigue took the place of the hurrying struggle of the passions; bigotry, politics, and sensual pleasure seemed to be the only things men were in earnest about. As a consequence, there were two essential differences between the old dramatists and the new—one in the stuff wherein they wrought, and the other in the audience that they addressed. The former dealt with human nature; the latter dealt with society and its conventions. The former appealed to the people; the latter

appealed to a small class of men and women of fashion. Speaking broadly, it may be said that whatever theme the early dramatists touched, whether in ancient Greece or Rome, mediæval Italy or contemporary England, or even in fairyland or on an enchanted island, they nearly always wrought naturally and sincerely, and conveyed an impression of intense reality through man, woman, ghost, fay, or misformed monster. There was creative art. Broadly speaking, the later dramatists seldom succeeded in producing more than an impression of the conventional and artificial, even in representing the life about them. They peopled the theatre with the creatures of imitative art. This statement is made to admit exceptions; for even Shakespeare, in his youth, appealed to courtiers and scholars in "Love's Labour's Lost," and forgot the real in the artificial.

No doubt the later dramatists went astray sometimes merely in their eagerness to seek new fields. Dryden makes the point with his usual terseness and clearness, in the defence of the return to the use of rhyme in the drama, which one of the speakers in the "Essay of Dramatic Poetry" puts forward. Discussing Shakespeare and his comrades he says: "They are honoured and almost adored by us, as they deserve; neither do I know any so presumptuous of themselves as to contend with them. Yet give me leave to say thus much, without injury to their ashes, that not only we shall never equal them, but they could never equal themselves were they to rise and write again. We acknowledge them our fathers in wit, but they have ruined their estates themselves before they came to their children's hands. There is scarce a humour, a character, or any kind of plot which they have not used. All comes sullied or wasted to us; and were they to entertain this age, they could not now make so plentiful treatments out of such decayed fortunes. This, therefore, will be a good argument for us either not to write at all, or to attempt some other way. There is no bay to be expected in their walks." The relapse into rhyme was merely temporary; and though successful on the French stage, it passed out of English dramatic literature forever. It was a new way unshadowed by laurel.

It is a pity that in the search for novelty the dramatists of the Restoration did not think of striving after a better morality in their work. They reached a certain decency and decorum in language and put aside something of the coarseness of their predecessors; but they outdid them in licentiousness. The early dramatists despised

the Puritan and laughed at him ; but the later dramatists had reason to hate him, and for the sake of that hatred they put a sharp antagonism between the stage and good morals, common sense, and sobriety of life. Too often in ridiculing hypocrisy they fell to glorying in vice that happened to be shameless. In another age the faults of the dramatists of this era were modified, if not amended ; but though there was sentimental comedy at one time, realistic drama at another, or a classic revival at a third, it may be said that they shaped the tendencies of the stage for more than a hundred years. Even to our day it has rarely escaped from old theatrical effects, dramatic traditions, artificial influences. It remained long the world of transparent villains, testy fathers, talkative heroes, and careless gallants ; and it has seldom got back to real life or learned to put its trust in the people. It is more apt to give them what they are supposed to want than what they do want.

In "As You Like It," where Phoebe falls suddenly in love with Rosalind disguised as a boy, she exclaims :

"Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might;
Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

The dead shepherd was Christopher Marlowe, who is commonly called the forerunner of Shakespeare ; and the line quoted is from the poem of "Hero and Leander," a loose paraphrase from Musæus, left unfinished by Marlowe, which Swinburne describes as preëminent "in clear mastery of narrative and presentation, in melodious ease and simplicity of strength," as well as in "the adorable beauty and impeccable perfection of separate lines and passages." Marlowe is not much read except by poets and critics. The former love him as one of the sons of genius who lived unhappily and died early, with only fragments of his message to men put into articulate music ; the latter study him as the comrade of Shakespeare, his elder brother in the art of song, the genius who gave the English drama its romantic cast, and the first writer to popularize the use of blank verse, the noblest instrument for the expression of exalted passion in dramatic composition. Marlowe began to write for the stage early, and his first play was produced in London before 1687, the year when he took his master's degree at Cambridge. He won popularity and leadership at once. He was of humble origin, but of a daring spirit, reckless in conduct and bold in thought, a scholar

without reverence for authority divine or human. There is no consecutive story of his life; but his literary influence is clear, the power of his personality is easily inferred, and a few suggestive facts bring out sharply the lights and shadows of his character. He lived a life of riot and excess; and his brief and brilliant career came to a tragic close in May, 1593, when he was killed in a brawl, while carousing in a tavern at Deptford. It is said that he quarreled with one Francis Archer about a woman of ill-repute, and that in his fury he drew his dagger and struck at his opponent. Archer, in warding off the blow, so turned the weapon that it struck the poet's own head, inflicting a wound from which he died in great agony. Something of the strangeness of the tale may be due to the pious embellishments of writers eager to picture in the strongest colours the death of a noted atheist.

Except his plays Marlowe left nothing of literary value but a pretty lyric poem and the translation of "Hero and Leander," in which the dainty verse has something of the quaintness, elaborateness, sensuousness, and tediousness of detail that mark the poems of Shakespeare, with greater freedom and grace of movement. It is supposed that he contributed some of the material in some of Shakespeare's earlier plays; and the speech of Gloucester, for instance, at the close of Scene 2, Act III, of the third part of "King Henry Sixth," is either Marlowe, or it is Shakespeare aiming to "bombast out a blank verse" in Marlowe's loftiest style. Of the six dramas attributed to Marlowe, one, "Dido, Queen of Carthage," was finished by another hand after the poet's death; another, "The Massacre at Paris," was an attempt to make available for the stage a startling contemporary event; and neither is of any great value. On the four remaining tragedies "Tamburlaine the Great," "The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus," "The Jew of Malta," and "Edward the Second" the poet's fame rests as upon four great pillars, somewhat rough-hewn and grotesque, but colossal in their proportions and noble in their effect. Three of them, "Tamburlaine," "Faustus," and "The Jew of Malta" bear a strong family resemblance. Each serves as the embodiment of a single character, which is in itself but the incarnation of a fierce passion. "Tamburlaine" represents the thirst for power, satisfied through martial conquest; "Faustus" represents the thirst for power satisfied through knowledge; and the "Jew of Malta" represents the thirst for power satisfied through

wealth. Each hero is respectively ambition, curiosity or avarice personified. When a great poet conceives of a character in this way, we may look for grandeur of outline, intensity of passion, brightness of language, and glory of imagery in his work; but we must also look for lack of proportion, undue straining after effect that in time involves the sacrifice of naturalness and the loss of sympathy on the part of the reader. In "Tamburlaine" the career of the Scythian shepherd who deemed himself destined to universal conquest is traced. The rush of incident is wonderful, and the splendour of language keeps pace with it, until the actions of the hero grow grotesque and his declamation degenerates into fustian. But through it all the terror deepens and darkens about "Tamburlaine," and the magnificence and music of the verse with the recurrence of what Ben Jonson called "Marlowe's mighty line," startle us into admiration. "Faustus" is the old story of the scholar that sold his soul to the devil, and the drama follows the popular prose tale on the same theme, mingling its petty buffooneries with visions of power and love and the anguish of the condemned soul. The closing scene of the tragedy is intensely imaginative; and it suggests an agony beyond the power of human expression to represent—that repentance, dread, and self-abasement appropriate to a sinner like Faustus who sees his certain doom approaching. The reader under the spell of the poet almost wishes for the granting of the doomed scholar's prayer:—

"O soul, be changed to little water-drops
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

"The Jew of Malta" opens impressively with a picture of an Israelitish merchant prince who has about him the promise of finer things than Shylock; but, as the play advances Barabbas degenerates rapidly into a mere monster of avarice and malice; the horrors accumulate so fast as to become commonplace; and lives are squandered with such careless ferocity that one is disposed to regard human beings as little better than rats, so far as the capacity of their misfortunes to excite dramatic emotion is concerned.

"Edward the Second" is the poet's most faultless play, and it has been praised by some as superior in points to Shakspeare's "Richard II." It deals with the story of the king who was done to death by his wife, Isabella the Fair, the "she-wolf of France," to use

Gray's phrase, and its climax is the scene to which the later poet alludes :

"Mark the year and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright,
The shrieks of death through Berkeley's roof that ring,)
Shrieks of an agonizing king !"

The first part of the drama, representing Edward's love for his favourite, Gaveston, has Marlowe's peculiar fault, the exaggeration of a single passion ; but the later scenes, where the dethroned monarch languishes in the sewage filth in the dungeon at Berkeley Castle, are free from his usual mannerisms. They tingle with power and pathos ; and yet the effects are attained with a conciseness and quietness of action and language that are like Shakespeare. The very murderers go about their inhuman business in a natural way that makes one shudder. The characters are more distinctly drawn and various than those in the earlier plays ; and the monotonous majesty of the versification is broken up by effective pauses and by double endings.

In estimating Marlowe it is common to compare, or rather to contrast him with Shakespeare. His admirers, while not daring to place him beside the greatest of poets, lay stress on the fact that he was only twenty-nine when he died ; that he had actually done better work than Shakespeare at that time, and that, though only about two months Shakespeare's senior, he was probably Shakespeare's master. All this may be conceded without conceding that Marlowe would have developed as Shakespeare did, if he also had lived to the age of fifty-two. His genius was intense, but it was limited in range. He painted passions in action rather than characters, and could not, therefore have painted in great variety. He began with the general sentiment and followed it into its various expressions, instead of imagining men of different natures developed in relation to each other and to circumstances. He had neither Shakespeare's wit nor his humour. Moreover, like many other poets who have died young, he had grave defects of character which render it doubtful whether he might not have deteriorated with the progress of years. Granting him a career as long as Shakespeare's, is it likely that it would have been so full of quiet and easy accomplishment? It is known that he plunged into the Bohemian life of the early dramatists with a fierce enjoyment and became noted among the most notorious of them. The evidence on this point is

as clear as that on any other fact connected with the literary history of his age. It is found in the canting death-bed repentance of his friend Robert Greene, a poet, dramatist and fellow-graduate of Cambridge; and, whether written by him or written for him, it is alike conclusive against the comrades he accuses of sin. Some of the early dramatists were Catholics, some Protestants, some of both creeds, and some of neither. Probably the prevailing tone was indifference to religion. But Greene charged Marlowe with atheism; and a curious corroboration of the charge survives in the declaration of a fellow named Richard Bame who was hanged at Tyburn, December 6, 1694. A few days before Marlowe's death Bame lodged information against him for certain "damnable opinions and judgment of religion and scorn of God's word." Some of these opinions are too gross for even a summary; but many of them seem characteristic of the poet. He is represented as holding that the ancients have written of the world sixteen thousand years ago, whereas Adam lived within six thousand; that religion is a mere matter of policy devised to keep the common people in awe; that Moses was a juggler, not a whit cleverer than a mountebank of the day called Heriot; that Christ was merely a carpenter's son, and the Jews who knew him best were the best judges as to whether he deserved to be put to death or not; that if he were to undertake a new religion he would adopt a more excellent and admirable method; that all the apostles were fishermen and base fellows except Paul, who had wit, but was a timorous fellow in bidding men to be subject to magistrates against conscience; that if there be any good religion it is in the Papists; that all Protestants are hypocritical asses; and that he had as good a right to coin money as the Queen of England.

In expressing doubt as to whether Marlowe would have accomplished greater things if he had been spared, it is not necessary to deny that he was one of the most nobly gifted of English poets. He lived in an age of intellectual giants, and among them his supremacy was apparently taken for granted. In the tributes of his contemporaries there is a touch of sincerity not always found in their mutual praises. Not to quote lesser authorities, Shakespeare's phrase already cited is a eulogy; Jonson's allusion to his "mighty line" in the fine poem on Shakespeare has become proverbial; Chapman spoke of him as standing "up to the chin in the Pierian spring"; and Drayton said that "his raptures were all air and fire." But as

he was akin to Faust in bartering faith for pleasure, it may be said that his best epitaph is in the closing chorus of one of his great tragedies :

"Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burnèd is Apollo's laurel bough
That sometime grew within this learned man;
Faustus is gone."

Ben Jonson was born ten years later than Shakespeare and Marlowe ; and he may be described as one of the most positive figures in our literary history. He was poet laureate ; he was the hero of many quarrels ; he was imprisoned twice ; he was on intimate terms with many eminent persons and left records of that intimacy in poetry ; he was the comrade of one generation of poets and the mentor of another ; he was not given to reticence even in his dramas ; and, lest self-revelation should be incomplete, he visited the poet Drummond at Hawthornden, and talked freely of many things, venturing even into "scandal about Queen Elizabeth," unaware that his host was taking notes for posterity. He was, next to Milton, probably the most learned of English poets, aided Bacon to translate his works into Latin, helped Raleigh with his history, and wrote the poems introducing the first edition of Shakespeare's works, thronged with such enduring phrases as "gentle Shakespeare," "sweet swan of Avon," "not of an age but for all time." He was big, coarse, dictatorial, but clearly a man of generous heart and powerful intellect. He was great as a writer of tragedy, though he overloaded his dialogue with ancient learning ; great as a writer of contemporary comedy, though there was nearly always a suggestion of bitterness in his humour ; great as a lyric poet, striking some sweet, strong strain of melody, and weaving into it simple word, delicate sentiment, and subtle thought that seemed betrothed for harmonious union from immemorial time ; — but greatest in a tavern with a group of literary comrades round him, his slow faculties quickened to activity and alertness with wine, and striking fire in the clashing rivalry of wits as gay and nimble as his own. It was to him in memory of such occasions that Beaumont wrote from the country :

"Methinks the little wit I had is lost
Since I saw you ; for wit is like a rest
Held up at tennis, which men do the best
With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid !"

And many years afterward Herrick sang an echoing strain :

“ Ah Ben !

Say how or when

Shall we thy guests

Meet at those lyric feasts

Made at the Sun,

The Dog, the Triple Tun;

Where we such clusters had

As made us nobly wild, not mad?

And yet each verse of thine

Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.”

As a dramatist, Jonson paid more attention to classic models than his contemporaries; and in his Roman tragedies he plundered the Latin poets and historians in the vain endeavour to reproduce the life of Rome; so that, as Dryden says, you track him everywhere in their snow. In “*The Alchemist*,” the unities of time, place, and action are preserved, though it is a comedy of contemporary life, and yet the interest is so varied that no sense of restriction comes to the reader. The movement of the play is rapid and natural; the leading characters are full of life to the finger-tips; and if some of the minor characters seem rather too grotesque and foolish, they at least serve to keep up the fun and set off the sharpers with whom they are brought into contact. The play shows not less plainly than his Roman tragedies Jonson’s painstaking study of detail. The whole nomenclature of alchemy, a jargon in which the modern scholar can only catch the faintest meaning, is at the poet’s command, and he seems to have mastered enough of the laboratory work at least to give colour to the imposture on which turns the action of the play. The same minute knowledge is displayed in regard to the tobacconist’s business, because a tobacconist is introduced. We hardly realize in our day what a part alchemy played in the middle ages; and it remained a source of fraud even after Jonson’s time, though it is supposed that this comedy did much to make men ashamed of the dream of transmuting baser metals into gold. In Evelyn’s “*Diary*” is this entry for January 2, 1651, at Paris: “I went to one Mark Antonio, an incomparable artist in enameling. He wrought by the lamp figures in boss of a large size, even to the life, so that nothing could be better moulded. He told us stories of a Genoese jeweller, who had the great arcanum and had made projection before him several times. He met him at Cyprus travel-

ling into Egypt, on his return from whence he died at sea, and the secret with him ; that else he had promised to have left it to him ; that all his effects were seized on and dissipated by the Greeks in the vessel to an immense value. He also affirmed that, being in a goldsmith's shop at Amsterdam, a person of very low stature came in and desired the goldsmith to melt him a pound of lead ; which done he unscrewed the pommel of his sword, and taking out of a little box a small quantity of powder, casting it into the crucible, poured an ingot out, which when cold he took up, saying, 'Sir, you will be paid for your lead in the crucible,' and so went out immediately. When he was gone the goldsmith found four ounces of good gold in it ; but could never set eye again on the little man, though he sought all the city for him. Antonio asserted this with great obstestation ; nor know I what to think of it, there are so many impostors and people that love to tell strange stories, as this artist did, who had been a great rover, and spoke ten different languages." If Evelyn was so puzzled, we need not wonder at Sir Epicure Mammon in the play and his gorgeous dreams, as he listened to the report of the progress of the alchemist and his experiments : —

" My mists

I'll have of perfume, vapoured 'bout the room
To lose ourselves in ; and my baths
Like pits to fall into ; from whence we will come forth
And roll us dry in gossamer and roses. . . .

My meat shall all come in, in Indian shells,
Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies,
The tongues of carps and dormice, camels' heels,
Boiled in the spirit of Sol, and dissolved pearl,
Apicius' diet, 'gainst the epilepsy ;
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber
Headed with diamond and carbuncle. . . .

My shirts

I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet soft and light
As cobwebs ; and for all my other raiment
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew ;
My gloves of fishes' and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of Paradise, and eastern air."

There are many good strokes in the play, but few better strokes anywhere than that which pictures the new view that Sir Epicure

takes of things, when he learns of the imposture of the pretended alchemist and realizes that his luscious visions are gone forever : —

“I will go mount a turnip-cart and preach
The end of the world within these two months.”

In the days of Elizabeth and her successor, partnership in dramatic composition was common ; but there were two dramatists, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, who worked together so constantly and harmoniously, and who were united by so firm a friendship, that their literary partnership has become an element of their fame. For a time each lost his identity, and the name of both was used to cover even the work of the survivor, done long after the death of the younger poet had dissolved their companionship. They not only worked together but lived together ; and it is said that they had even their clothes in common, and some things about which men are apt to be more jealous than about their clothes. They were both of good birth, breeding, and education, and came of families distinguished in literature. It is said that they were more popular in their day than Shakespeare or Ben Jonson, and it is not hard to believe the story as we glance through their plays. Every line is evidently the work of men writing for praise and popularity. There is little of solemn purpose, little of moral force, little of artistic reticence. There is plenty of genius, but it is genius wild, not unstudied, but full of perversity. The construction is often admirable, the movement rapid, the stage effects striking, the style buoyant and brilliant, the passion strong, the wit keen, and the humour broad. There is so much that is good that you wonder why the whole effect is not better. After a while you notice that the workmanship is a trifle too hurried. A play that begins in a noble strain of poetry is apt to fail as the plot proceeds and sink into mere melodrama where it ought to rise to a climax of tragedy. It is as if the authors grew weary of their work or were spurred beyond their normal pace by impatient managers. You notice a sameness, too, in many of the characters. They are led astray by the same devices, and avenge themselves by the same methods. Above all, there is a constant recurrence of the same theme, love or lust ; and even the relations of the sexes may grow wearisome when dealt upon in fifty-two dramas. Throughout all there is a looseness of manners and language that is startling even to a student of old English literature. The men seem to be made up

without any sense of the obligation of purity, though occasionally one of them is kept true by a great passion; with the women, as has been well said, chastity seems to be more a matter of physical condition than of moral nature. Yet on the whole it is no great wonder that those gay young gentlemen, whose genius blossomed in the beginning of King James's reign, were popular then, and no wonder that their works have maintained their fame even in more fastidious times.

Of the plays credited to Beaumont and Fletcher, it is probable that the latter wrote more than thirty and had some share in the rest. To the partnership with Beaumont, formed about 1605, it is thought that he contributed more than his share of wit, invention and poetic inspiration, and less than his share of good taste, sustained power and constructive ability. He had wonderful facility in composition, as he wrote three plays a year for a time, and his first publisher said that in whatever manuscript came to him in Fletcher's hand there were no blots or erasures. In his daily life his genius overflowed and his conversation was said to be in itself a comedy. Few of the English poets were more richly endowed. In gay exuberance of humour, in richness of invention, in the conception of manly strength and gallantry in passionate action, he was next to Shakespeare: in the romantic fervour of his imagination and the quaint faculty for pictures of that shepherd's life that never was on wood and stream, he was akin to Spenser; in the happy grace of poetic expression he rivalled Milton in his lighter moods. "The Faithful Shepherdess" represents him not so much as a dramatist as a poet; and yet it must remain the best type of English achievement in the pastoral drama. It is said that this sort of composition rose out of the "*Favola di Orfeo*," which Politian wrote in two days for a court festival in Mantua in 1483; and Becarri in the "*Sagrificio*," 1554, Tasso, in "*Aminta*," 1573, and Guarini in "*Pastor Fido*," 1590, brought it to perfection. The influence of the Italian pastoral like that of every other phase of Italian literature, was felt among the early English dramatists; and Lyly, Jonson, and Fletcher were tempted to direct imitation, while Shakespeare, more wisely, wrought into some of his plays the most available pastoral elements in the Arcadian life conceived by the poets. But the pastoral drama failed to take the English fancy. The best description of Fletcher's play, and the most reasonable explanation of its failure on the stage, is given

in one of several quaint consolations offered by George Chapman, on the occasion of its popular condemnation :

“ . . . But because
Your poem hath by us applause,
Renews the golden world and holds through all
The holy laws of homely pastoral,
Where flowers and founts and nymphs and demi-gods
And all the graces find their old abodes,
Where forests flourish but in endless verse,
And meadows nothing fit for purchasers;
This iron age that eats itself will never
Bite at your golden world; that others ever
Loved as itself.”

The scene of the play is remote from the every-day world and the life of it, and the characters are not men and women, but the offspring of creative art ; and yet withal the impression is one of reality, for the river-god, satyr, shepherd, and shepherdess are in harmony with their realm as the poet imagines it and are true to the laws of their being as he conceives it. The theme is the triumph of purity and morality : and Fletcher was sincere in his treatment of it, though high purpose, as in one of Richardson's novels, is somewhat clouded by the elements of impurity in the story. It is clear that he wrought with unusual care, and yet his verse seems to bubble upward with the spontaneous flow of a fountain ; and the poetic quality is deliciously refreshing. Milton probably took the idea of his masque of "Comus" from "The Faithful Shepherdess," and imitated some of the best passages : and for that reason "The Faithful Shepherdess" always appears to challenge comparison with "Comus," and no critic ventures to dismiss it without a word of censure, lest he should be open to the charge of disloyalty to Milton's fame. Let us disregard the custom. For dignity and beauty of style, for weight of thought, for elevation of sentiment, the superiority of "Comus" is manifest ; but, unlike the music described in it, its strains do not "create a soul under the ribs of death." There is no enchanted world, no lost lady, no son of Circe ; there are no anxious brothers ; but merely several poetic puppets, constructed to echo the notes of Milton. The Earl of Bridgewater is described as Lord President of Wales by an angel who takes part in the action, and his sons, Lord Brackly and Mr. Thomas Egerton, and his daughter, Lady Alice Egerton, who played their own parts, are described as coming to Ludlow Castle,

through an enchanted wood, where Comus holds his revels : and the result is a merely mechanical mixture of the actual and the impossible, without chemical affinity and producing no new substance. It is a great poem, though marred by the necessity of complimenting the Egerton family, but it lacks the quality of quickening dramatic power. And that quality "The Faithful Shepherdess" has.

In choosing a typical play of the class that deals mainly with manners one would naturally turn to the dramatists of the Restoration ; and "The Double Dealer," by Congreve, "The Plain Dealer," by Wycherley, or "The Beaux' Stratagem," by Farquhar, might serve as a brilliant example of an enduring school. There is in each rare literary skill ; there is art in construction ; there is the imagination that breathes reality into every character ; and in all there is the immoral suggestion of a licentious age. "The Double Dealer" and "The Plain Dealer" have wit, but it is the wit of satire ; "The Beaux' Stratagem" has wit, but it is the wit of gayety. Congreve's masterpiece leaves the impression of an art that makes villainy in man and woman so cunning and so strong as almost to command admiration as well as hate ; Wycherley's masterpiece is so coarse in fibre that it rouses disgust even in the manifestation of the most generous passion ; Farquhar's masterpiece overflows with humour so easy and fantastic that even highway robbery seems a matter of fun, and burglary a sort of lover's opportunity. But those dramas are unfit for acting and not good for general reading ; and so it is better to take, in illustration of the artificial comedy of the eighteenth century, Sheridan's "School for Scandal," which still keeps the stage and will probably never lose its popularity.

Charles Lamb, in an essay on our artificial comedy, pleads against taking the work of the leading dramatists of the school too seriously and judging the creatures of their theatrical world by the laws of common morality. He argues that they break through no conscientious restraints, because they know of none. "They have," he says, "got out of Christendom into the land — what shall I call it? — of cuckoldry, the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom." He praises Congreve for excluding from his scenes all pretensions to goodness or good feelings whatever ; and then adds : —

"Translated into real life, the characters of his, and his friend Wycherley's dramas are profligates and strumpets — the business of

their brief existence the undivided pursuit of lawless gallantry. No other spring of action or possible motive of conduct is recognized, principles which, if universally acted upon, must reduce the frame of things to chaos. But we do them wrong in so translating them. No such effects are produced in their world. When we are among them, we are among a chaotic people. We are not to judge of them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings, for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated, for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained, for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted, no holy wedlock bonds are snapped asunder, for affections depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong, gratitude or its opposite, claim or duty of paternity or sonship. Of what consequence is it to virtue, or how is she at all concerned about it, whether Sir Simon or Dapperwit steal away Miss Martha, or who is the father of Lord Froth's or Sir Paul Pliant's children?"

There is a touch of seeming reasonableness in this whimsical argument, for if a dramatist leads us into fairyland we do not expect to meet mere men and women, or to have Ariel, Puck, or Titania subject to the law of gravitation; but even if we are to stray out of Christendom, the poet ought not to lead us always into the Utopia of vice, or seek to disguise the fact that we have gone abroad. It is good to dream, but there be evil dreams; it is good to wander with ideals, but not low ideals; it is good to create an imaginary world, but not to people it with men and women whose characters are bad, whose actions are shameful, and whose conversation is vile. That is from the purpose of playing as the greatest of dramatists defined it.

Lamb, in speaking of "The School for Scandal," describes it admirably as somewhat akin to the plays of Congreve and Wycherley. He held also that it should be played, like other comedies of the kind, with an air of unreality, that it was so played in the beginning, and that it was only a new generation that took it in earnest.

It is one of our best acting plays, for Sheridan was a manager, and understood the art of constructing a play for effect; an orator, and knew the secret of touching at once the understanding and the sympathy of an audience; a wit, keenly satiric and gayly humorous; a man of the world, versed in the life about him, master of its resources, and a partaker in its follies. If he had not proved his

genius in many other ways, one might say that he seemed born and trained for comedy. It may be said of "The School for Scandal" that the sense of unreality in seeing it is almost a shield against criticism, but not quite; and, therefore, notwithstanding its many striking qualities, we can not refrain from finding fault with it, because not one of its characters challenges full sympathy. The scandalous college of which Lady Sneerwell is president, and Lady Teazle a licentiate, is too fantastic to provoke any feeling save amusement. But Sir Peter and Lady Teazle have elements of genuine humanity in them as well as elements of theatrical value; and their story appeals to the heart and the judgment. There is enough of manhood about Charles Surface to make us wish to sympathize with him as a hero; but his hardness even more than his profligacy grates on the sensibilities, and he is dismissed to love and happiness without a single quality that deserves either. In the screen scene, in the face of the only pathetic situation in the drama, he behaves meanly and maliciously, without a touch of good feeling or gentlemanly spirit. Charles Lamb made a special plea against taking Joseph Surface seriously; and no doubt many persons smile at his villainy rather than hate it; yet his fine sentiments and his smooth hypocrisy are the commonest devices of the prosperous scoundrel in actual life. Every one who has reached middle age is familiar with instances in which noble phrases and false pretences, without the aid of a single great quality or strong achievement, have carried vice and incapacity on to fortune. The people love a sentimental liar everywhere but on the stage, for there only are they apt to discern the falsehood.

Many modern English poets have been tempted into the use of dramatic form, but none of them has succeeded in writing a great and successful acting play. They make good literature; but they are apt to forget that the essential thing in a drama is not fine poetry, or the telling of a story, or subtle study of character, but action. They fail commonly because they lack constructive power, in which many of the plays that keep the stage may be said to be weak; but they fail also because they forget that every situation in a play must appeal directly to an audience and be understood at once. For the spectator each character must wear his heart upon his sleeve, and there must be no doubt about effects. They should be simple as the elements, and if need be glow like fire or rage like the storm.

Herein lies the peculiar charm of the drama. The people on the stage may move in ignorance; the hero may be maligned and suspected; the villain may pose as a just and loyal gentleman; the flimsiest devices may set wise men astray; but he that looks on must know the soul of each character that he watches and the aim of every stratagem. It is this superior knowledge that ennobles his interest, giving him the sense of a divine insight into the little world before him. For two or three hours he sits like a deity of old and looks down on the struggles of men. When in the "Electra" of Sophocles the companion of Orestes tells Clytemnestra the false story of his death in a chariot race, in words as resplendent as the hero and as resonant as the hoof-beats of the steeds, the wicked mother is deceived, but not the spectator; and when Orestes gives to his sister Electra the urn supposed to contain his own ashes, her grief is real enough to move our sympathy, though we know that solace is at hand. On any other scheme, witnessing a drama would be like watching a game of chess for one who knows neither the powers of the pieces nor the strategy of the players.

It is not necessary here to make a study of Robert Browning as a poet; but there can be no doubt that he had unusual dramatic insight and dramatic power. He wrote eight dramas; and many of his most striking poems are dramatic monologues; so that it may be said that none of our poets ever felt a stronger impulse to enter into the nature of another, to realize his environment and to disentangle the various influences moulding his character. He found it difficult to get away from the dramatic method; and to the end, even in the discussion of the problem of immortality, or in the relation of a tragic story, he was wont to give to everything the colour and effect that come from sifting through a peculiar intellect. Yet he was not a dramatist in the ordinary sense of the term. A close analysis of his genius written at the time of his death suggests the reason: "He chose to be a student of the strange and grotesque in character and conduct, to trace the intricate windings of purpose and go deeper into the moving forces of a man's strange acts than the man's own consciousness could carry himself. He likes the inconsistent, to exhibit the triumph of the notions, the impressions, the small vanities, the obliquities of moral sense, over the plain, straightforward, common-sensible forces of right and custom and interest. He takes us often to the point of view of the squinting

vision and shows us how the squint modifies the view." The critic adds: "He seemed to grow impatient of the work of the dramatist so far as it consists in evolving character by various situations and the influence of minor actors. He preferred to take some one man in some moment when the forces that have been gathering strength in the unnoticed workings of the thoughts and passions, suddenly break out in the stress of some crisis and assert their irresistible power; and so the dramatic monologue became more and more his favourite form, because here he needed to concern himself only with the intricacies of the thought, the methods of the spirit dealing with itself." His great theme as he declared it over and over again was the unfolding of the human soul under the manifold influences of life; and the representation of this spiritual development is hardly within the sphere of dramatic art. In watching the delicate processes the spectator grows confused and uncertain, loses his position of superior knowledge, and finds metaphysical study taking the place of dramatic interest. In most of Browning's dramas, even a reader is perplexed as to the meaning of the situations and the characters; and subtle and curious motives interfere with the play of primitive passions.

To "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'" alone among the dramas this criticism does not apply. The story is simple, the action is direct, the passions roused in the play are overmastering; and the characters are all noble though not faultless. It is a drama without a villain and without a conspiracy. It opens in holiday sunshine and darkens rapidly into disaster. Almost from the beginning you feel that the tragic elements are gathering irresistibly, and you listen for the step of doom. The peculiarity of the play is that it is not evil that works ruin so much as excess of goodness, a sort of bigotry of virtue. There is sin in it, of course, involving lack of trust and even duplicity, but it is sin that becomes deadly because it has entered into the Paradise of honour, purity and truth. A boy and a girl, in their excess of love and innocence, have given way to passion; and on the eve of a happy marriage their sin becomes known to the girl's brother, a man of a "chastity of honour which felt a stain like a wound." To a critic who never has seen the play acted, there seem to be two slight faults in its construction. We are not told at the beginning, or near enough to the beginning, that Mertoun and Mildred are lovers. The poet, no doubt, intended to convey a hint

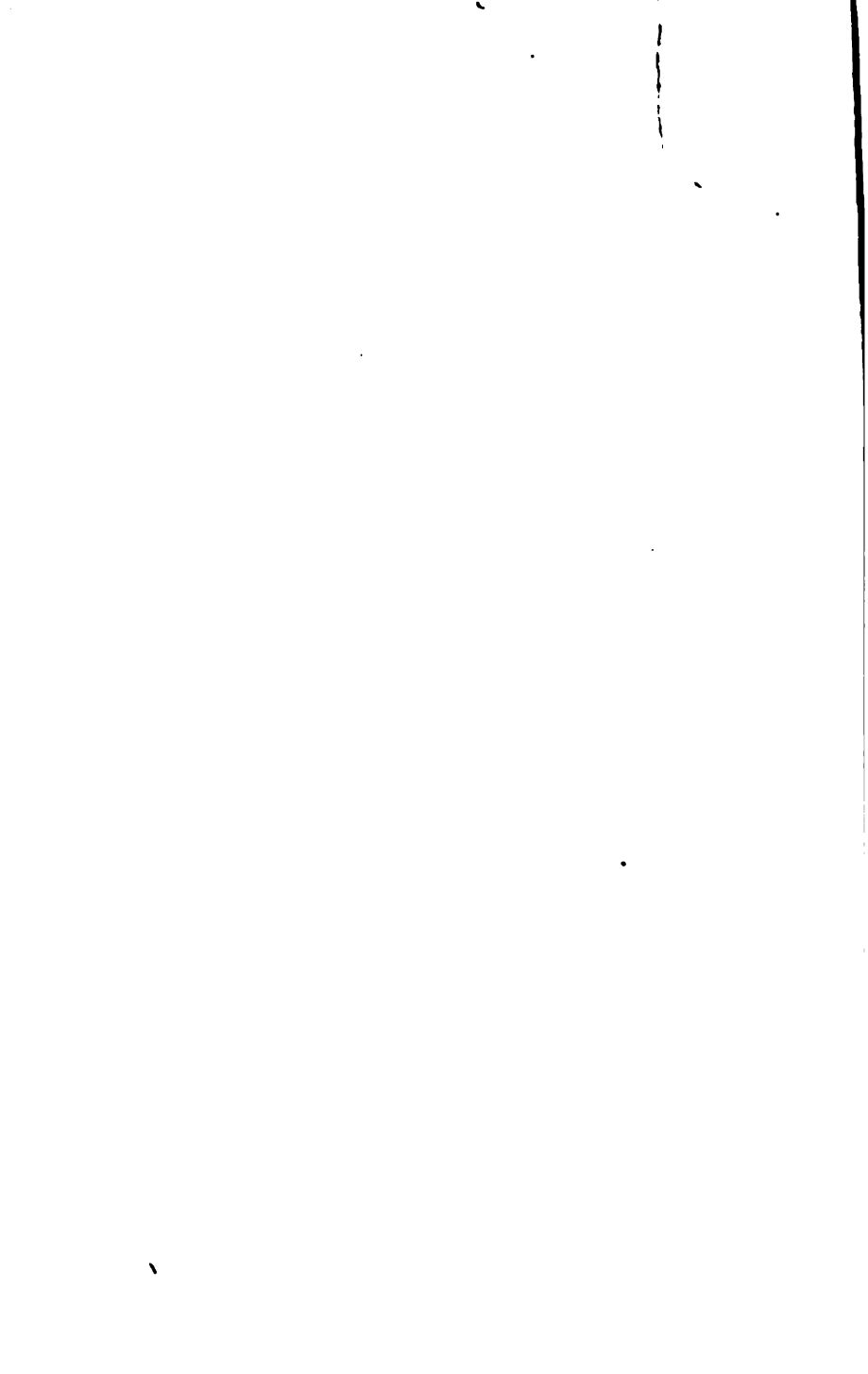
of mystery in the attitude of Gerard the Warrener, among the retainers of Thorold, Lord Tresham, in the opening scene ; but the hint is altogether too slight for dramatic effect, and so the reader loses the real significance of the scene where Mertoun comes to ask Tresham for his sister's hand, and the scene between Mildred and Gwendolen where the latter describes the interview. A blemish that affects character rather than action is the fact that Tresham kills Mertoun after the latter has thrown off his disguise in the park. He lies in wait to kill Mildred's lover, supposing him not to be Mertoun, and holding it as his sister's greatest degradation that she consented to marry Mertoun though having a lover whose name she will not confess. When Mertoun reveals himself, Tresham will not pause for explanation, forces a fight, and kills the youth to whom he has promised his sister as a wife, because they have been lovers. Then he repents. If the combat had taken place without a recognition, the character of Tresham would keep our sympathy and the reconciliation with Mildred at the tragic close would have been less strained. It may be urged, of course, that the recognition of Mertoun before the duel was necessary to bring out the master passion of Tresham, family pride ; but that is simply to say in another way that Browning preferred the abnormal in character to broad natural effects. Every character is cleverly drawn, the whole atmosphere of the play is pure and poetic, and the sense of sorrow is all the deeper that it comes into a scene rich with every promise of felicity and high achievement. The style has few of Browning's faults of carelessness ; and it may be likened to that of one of the early dramatists at his best. Every thought that does not tell on the development of the tragedy is flung aside.

John Howard Payne has a greater claim to fame in the authorship of a simple song than in his dramatic work ; but the play of " Brutus " represents fairly a great number of English dramas — those dealing in classic themes — without Jonson's overplus of learning and without Shakespeare's insight, but fairly true to Roman history and embodying the ideals of Roman life.

JOSEPH O'CONNOR.

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EDWARD THE SECOND

BY

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

THE exact date of Christopher Marlowe's birth is not known, but he was baptized at Canterbury, February 26, 1564, two months before the birth of Shakespeare. He was educated at King's School, Canterbury, and at Cambridge, where he took the bachelor's degree in 1583 and the master's in 1587. It is uncertain where he was between these dates; one conjecture makes him a soldier in the Netherlands. He produced six plays, and it is believed that he assisted Shakespeare in the composition of "Henry the Sixth" and "Titus Andronicus." He also wrote a few songs and made translations from the Latin, and an unfinished poem, "Hero and Leander," which is greatly admired, was published posthumously. In May, 1593, Marlowe was killed in a quarrel with a serving-man. His plays, with the dates of their production, as nearly as these can be ascertained, are: "Tamburlaine the Great" (1587, first printed in 1590); "The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus" (printed in 1604; probably put upon the stage soon after "Tamburlaine"); "The Jew of Malta" (produced after December, 1588; first printed in 1633); "Edward the Second" (1590); "The Massacre at Paris" (1591?); "The Tragedy of Dido" (first printed in 1594). The last was partly the work of Thomas Nash.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING EDWARD THE SECOND.
PRINCE EDWARD, his Son, afterwards King Edward the Third.
EARL OF KENT, Brother of King Edward the Second.
GAVESTON.
WARWICK.
LANCASTER.
PEMBROKE.
ARUNDEL.
LEICESTER.
BERKELEY.
MORTIMER, the elder.
MORTIMER, the younger, his Nephew.
SPENSER, the elder.
SPENSER, the younger, his Son.
ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY.
BISHOP of COVENTRY.
BISHOP of WINCHESTER.
BALDOCK.
BEAUMONT.
TRUSSEL.
GURNEY.
MATREVIS.
LIGHTBORN.
SIR JOHN of HAINAULT.
LEVUNE.
RICE AP HOWEL.
Abbot, Monks, Herald, Lords, Poor Men, James, Mower, Champion,
Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.
QUEEN ISABELLA, wife of King Edward the Second.
Niece to King Edward the Second, daughter of the Duke of Gloucester.
Ladies.

EDWARD THE SECOND

ACT I

SCENE I.—A STREET IN LONDON

Enter GAVESTON, reading a letter.

GAV. "My father is deceased ! Come, Gaveston,
And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend."
Ah ! words that make me surfeit with delight !
What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston
Than live and be the favourite of a king !
Sweet prince, I come ; these, these thy amorous lines
Might have enforced me to have swum from France,
And, like Leander, gasped upon the sand,
So thou would'st smile, and take me in thine arms.
The sight of London to my exiled eyes
Is as Elysium to a new-come soul ;
Not that I love the city, or the men,
But that it harbours him I hold so dear —
The king, upon whose bosom let me lie,
And with the world be still at enmity.
What need the arctic people love starlight,
To whom the sun shines both by day and night ?
Farewell base stooping to the lordly peers !
My knee shall bow to none but to the king.
As for the multitude, that are but sparks,
Raked up in embers of their poverty ; —
Tanti ; I'll fawn first on the wind
That glanceth at my lips, and flieth away.
But how now, what are these ?

Enter three Poor Men.

Men. Such as desire your worship's service.

Gav. What canst thou do ?

First P. Man. I can ride.

Gav. But I have no horse. What art thou ?

Second P. Man. A traveller.

Gav. Let me see — thou would'st do well
To wait at my trencher and tell me lies at dinner-time ;
And as I like your discoursing, I'll have you.
And what art thou?

Third P. Man. A soldier, that hath served against the Scot.

Gav. Why, there are hospitals for such as you ;
I have no war, and therefore, sir, begone.

Third P. Man. Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,
That would'st reward them with an hospital.

Gav. Ay, ay, these words of his move me as much
As if a goose would play the porcupine,
And dart her plumes, thinking to pierce my breast.
But yet it is no pain to speak men fair ;
I'll flatter these, and make them live in hope.
You know that I came lately out of France,
And yet I have not viewed my lord the king ;
If I speed well, I'll entertain you all.

[*Aside.*

All. We thank your worship.

Gav. I have some business. Leave me to myself.

All. We will wait here about the court.

[*Exeunt.*

Gav. Do ; these are not men for me :
I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
Musicians, that with touching of a string
May draw the pliant king which way I please.
Music and poetry is his delight ;
Therefore I'll have Italian masks by night,
Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows ;
And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad ;
My men, like satyrs grazing on the lawns,
Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay.¹
Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
To hide those parts which men delight to see,
Shall bathe him in a spring ; and there hard by,
One like Actæon peeping through the grove,
Shall by the angry goddess be transformed,
And running in the likeness of an hart
By yelping hounds pulled down, shall seem to die ; —
Such things as these best please his majesty.
Here comes my lord the king, and the nobles
From the parliament. I'll stand aside.

[*Retires.*

¹ Or heydeguy, a rural dance.

Enter KING EDWARD, LANCASTER, *the* Elder MORTIMER, Young MORTIMER, KENT, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. Lancaster !

Lan. My lord.

Gav. That Earl of Lancaster do I abhor. [Aside.

K. Edw. Will you not grant me this? In spite of them
I'll have my will; and these two Mortimers,
That cross me thus, shall know I am displeased. [Aside.

E. Mor. If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston.

Gav. That villain Mortimer ! I'll be his death. [Aside.

Y. Mor. Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself,
Were sworn to your father at his death,
That he should ne'er return into the realm :
And know, my lord, ere I will break my oath,
This sword of mine, that should offend your foes,
Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need,
And underneath thy banners march who will,
For Mortimer will hang his armour up.

Gav. Mort dieu ! [Aside.

K. Edw. Well, Mortimer, I'll make thee rue these words.
Beseems it thee to contradict thy king?
Frown'st thou thereat, aspiring Lancaster?
The sword shall plane the furrows of thy brows,
And hew these knees that now are grown so stiff.
I will have Gaveston; and you shall know
What danger 'tis to stand against your king.

Gav. Well done, Ned ! [Aside.

Lan. My lord, why do you thus incense your peers,
That naturally would love and honour you
But for that base and obscure Gaveston?
Four earldoms have I, besides Lancaster —
Derby, Salisbury, Lincoln, Leicester, —
These will I sell, to give my soldiers pay,
Ere Gaveston shall stay within the realm ;
Therefore, if he be come, expel him straight.

Kent. Barons and earls, your pride hath made me mute ;
But now I'll speak, and to the proof, I hope.
I do remember, in my father's days,
Lord Percy of the north, being highly moved,
Braved Moubery in presence of the king ;
For which, had not his highness loved him well,
He should have lost his head ; but with his look
The undaunted spirit of Percy was appeased,
And Moubery and he were reconciled :

Yet dare you brave the king unto his face. —
 Brother, revenge it, and let these their heads
 Preach upon poles, for trespass of their tongues.

War. O, our heads !

K. Edw. Ay, yours ; and therefore I would wish you grant —

War. Bridle thy anger, gentle Mortimer.

Y. Mor. I cannot, nor I will not ; I must speak. —
 Cousin, our hands I hope shall fence our heads,
 And strike off his that makes you threaten us.
 Come, uncle, let us leave the brain-sick king,
 And henceforth parley with our naked swords.

E. Mor. Wiltshire hath men enough to save our heads.

War. All Warwickshire will love him for my sake.

Lan. And northward Gaveston hath many friends. —
 Adieu, my Lord ; and either change your mind,
 Or look to see the throne, where you should sit,
 To float in blood ; and at thy wanton head,
 The glozing head of thy base minion thrown.

[*Exeunt all except KING EDWARD, KENT, GAVESTON
 and Attendants.*]

K. Edw. I cannot brook these haughty menaces ;
 Am I a king, and must be overruled ? —
 Brother, display my ensigns in the field ;
 I'll bandy¹ with the barons and the earls,
 And either die or live with Gaveston.

Gav. I can no longer keep me from my lord.

[*Comes forward.*]

K. Edw. What, Gaveston ! welcome ! — Kiss not my hand —
 Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee.
 Why should'st thou kneel ? know'st thou not who I am ?
 Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston !
 Not Hylas was more mourned of Hercules,
 Than thou hast been of me since thy exile.

Gav. And since I went from hence, no soul in hell
 Hath felt more torment than poor Gaveston.

K. Edw. I know it. — Brother, welcome home my friend.
 Now let the treacherous Mortimers conspire,
 And that high-minded Earl of Lancaster :
 I have my wish, in that I joy thy sight ;
 And sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land,
 Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.
 I here create thee Lord High Chamberlain,
 Chief Secretary to the state and me,

¹ Contend. The expression is no doubt borrowed from the old game of bandy-ball, which was similar to golf.

Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.

Gav. My lord, these titles far exceed my worth.

Kent. Brother, the least of these may well suffice
For one of greater birth than Gaveston.

K. Edw. Cease, brother; for I cannot brook these words.
Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts,
Therefore, to equal it, receive my heart;
If for these dignities thou be envied,
I'll give thee more; for, but to honour thee,
Is Edward pleased with kingly regiment.¹
Fear'st thou thy person? thou shalt have a guard:
Wantest thou gold? go to my treasury:
Wouldst thou be loved and feared? receive my seal;
Save or condemn, and in our name command
Whatso thy mind affects, or fancy likes.

Gav. It shall suffice me to enjoy your love,
Which whiles I have, I think myself as great
As Cæsar riding in the Roman street,
With captive kings at his triumphant car.

Enter the BISHOP of COVENTRY.

K. Edw. Whither goes my lord of Coventry so fast?

B. of Cov. To celebrate your father's exequies.
But is that wicked Gaveston returned?

K. Edw. Ay, priest, and lives to be revenged on thee,
That wert the only cause of his exile.

Gav. 'Tis true; and but for reverence of these robes,
Thou should'st not plod one foot beyond this place.

B. of Cov. I did no more than I was bound to do;
And, Gaveston, unless thou be reclaimed,
As then I did incense the parliament,
So will I now, and thou shalt back to France.

Gav. Saving your reverence, you must pardon me.

K. Edw. Throw off his golden mitre, rend his stole,
And in the channel² christen him anew.

Kent. Ah, brother, lay not violent hands on him!
For he'll complain unto the see of Rome.

Gav. Let him complain unto the see of hell;
I'll be revenged on him for my exile.

K. Edw. No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods:
Be thou lord bishop and receive his rents,
And make him serve thee as thy chaplain:
I give him thee — here, use him as thou wilt.

¹ Rule.

² Gutter.

Gav. He shall to prison, and there die in bolts.

K. Edw. Ay, to the Tower, the Fleet, or where thou wilt.

B. of Cov. For this offence, be thou accurst of God !

K. Edw. Who's there? Convey this priest to the Tower.

B. of Cov. True, true.

K. Edw. But in the meantime, Gaveston, away,
And take possession of his house and goods.

Come, follow me, and thou shalt have my guard
To see it done, and bring thee safe again.

Gav. What should a priest do with so fair a house?
A prison may best beseem his holiness.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—WESTMINSTER

*Enter on one side the two MORTIMERS; on the other,
WARWICK and LANCASTER.*

War. 'Tis true, the bishop is in the Tower,
And goods and body given to Gaveston.

Lan. What ! will they tyrannise upon the church?
Ah, wicked king ! accursèd Gaveston !
This ground, which is corrupted with their steps,
Shall be their timeless¹ sepulchre or mine.

Y. Mor. Well, let that peevish Frenchman guard him sure ;
Unless his breast be sword-proof he shall die.

E. Mor. How now ! why droops the Earl of Lancaster?

Y. Mor. Wherefore is Guy of Warwick discontent?

Lan. That villain Gaveston is made an earl.

E. Mor. An earl !

War. Ay, and besides Lord Chamberlain of the realm,
And Secretary too, and Lord of Man.

E. Mor. We may not, nor we will not suffer this.

Y. Mor. Why post we not from hence to levy men?

Lan. "My Lord of Cornwall," now at every word !
And happy is the man whom he vouchsafes,
For vailing of his bonnet,² one good look.
Thus, arm in arm, the king and he doth march :
Nay more, the guard upon his lordship waits ;
And all the court begins to flatter him.

War. Thus leaning on the shoulder of the king,
He nods and scorns and smiles at those that pass.

E. Mor. Doth no man take exceptions at the slave?

Lan. All stomach³ him, but none dare speak a word.

Y. Mor. Ah, that bewraths their baseness, Lancaster !

¹ Untimely.

² Removing it as a mark of respect.

³ i.e. Feel resentment.

Were all the earls and barons of my mind,
We'd hale him from the bosom of the king,
And at the court-gate hang the peasant up,
Who, swoln with venom of ambitious pride,
Will be the ruin of the realm and us.

War. Here comes my lord of Canterbury's grace.

Lan. His countenance bewrays he is displeased.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY and an Attendant.

A. of Cant. First were his sacred garments rent and torn,
Then laid they violent hands upon him ; next
Himself imprisoned, and his goods asseized :
This certify the Pope ; — away, take horse. [*Exit Attend.*

Lan. My lord, will you take arms against the king?

A. of Cant. What need I? God himself is up in arms,
When violence is offered to the church.

Y. Mor. Then will you join with us, that be his peers,
To banish or behead that Gaveston?

A. of Cant. What else, my lords? for it concerns me near ; —
The bishopric of Coventry is his.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Y. Mor. Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast?

Q. Isab. Unto the forest, gentle Mortimer,
To live in grief and baleful discontent ;
For now, my lord, the king regards me not,
But doats upon the love of Gaveston.
He claps his cheeks, and hangs about his neck,
Smiles in his face, and whispers in his ears ;
And when I come he frowns, as who should say,
"Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston."

E. Mor. Is it not strange that he is thus bewitched?

Y. Mor. Madam, return unto the court again :
That sly inveigling Frenchman we'll exile,
Or lose our lives ; and yet, ere that day come,
The king shall lose his crown ; for we have power,
And courage too, to be revenged at full.

Q. Isab. But yet lift not your swords against the king.

Lan. No ; but we will lift Gaveston from hence.

War. And war must be the means, or he'll stay still.

Q. Isab. Then let him stay ; for rather than my lord
Shall be oppressed with civil mutinies,
I will endure a melancholy life,
And let him frolic with his minion.

A. of Cant. My lords, to ease all this, but hear me speak :—
We and the rest, that are his counsellors,
Will meet, and with a general consent
Confirm his banishment with our hands and seals.

Lan. What we confirm the king will frustrate.

Y. Mor. Then may we lawfully revolt from him.

War. But say, my lord, where shall this meeting be?

A. of Cant. At the New Temple.

Y. Mor. Content.

A. of Cant. And, in the meantime, I'll entreat you all
To cross to Lambeth, and there stay with me.

Lan. Come then, let's away.

Y. Mor. Madam, farewell !

Q. Isab. Farewell, sweet Mortimer ; and, for my sake,
Forbear to levy arms against the king.

Y. Mor. Ay, if words will serve ; if not, I must. [Exeunt

SCENE III

Enter GAVESTON and KENT.

Gav. Edmund, the mighty Prince of Lancaster,
That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
Are gone toward Lambeth —

Kent. There let them remain.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV. — (THE SCENE IS MORE PROBABLY THE KING'S PALACE AT WESTMINSTER THAN THE NEW TEMPLE, AS PROPOSED BY THE ARCHBISHOP.)

Enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, the Elder MORTIMER, Young MORTIMER the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY and Attendants.

Lan. Here is the form of Gaveston's exile :
May it please your lordship to subscribe your name.

A. of Cant. Give me the paper.

[He subscribes, as do the others after him.

Lan. Quick, quick, my lord ; I long to write my name.

War. But I long more to see him banished hence.

Y. Mor. The name of Mortimer shall fright the king,
Unless he be declined from that base peasant.

Enter KING EDWARD, GAVESTON, and KENT.

K. Edw. What, are you moved that Gaveston sits here ?

It is our pleasure ; we will have it so.

Lan. Your grace doth well to place him by your side,
For nowhere else the new earl is so safe.

E. Mor. What man of noble birth can brook this sight?
Quam male conveniunt !

See what a scornful look the peasant casts !

Pem. Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants?

War. Ignoble vassal, that like Phaeton
Aspir'st unto the guidance of the sun !

Y. Mor. Their downfall is at hand, their forces down :
We will not thus be faced and over-peered.

K. Edw. Lay hands on that traitor Mortimer !

E. Mor. Lay hands on that traitor Gaveston !

Kent. Is this the duty that you owe your king?

War. We know our duties — let him know his peers.

K. Edw. Whither will you bear him? Stay, or ye shall die.

E. Mor. We are no traitors ; therefore threaten not.

Gav. No, threaten not, my lord, but pay them home !
Were I a king——

Y. Mor. Thou villain, wherefore talk'st thou of a king,
That hardly art a gentleman by birth?

K. Edw. Were he a peasant, being my minion,
I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him.

Lan. My lord, you may not thus disparage us.—
Away, I say, with hateful Gaveston !

E. Mor. And with the Earl of Kent that favours him.

[Attendants *remove* KENT and GAVESTON.]

K. Edw. Nay, then, lay violent hands upon your king,
Here, Mortimer, sit thou in Edward's throne :

Warwick and Lancaster, wear you my crown :

Was ever king thus overruled as I?

Lan. Learn then to rule us better, and the realm.

Y. Mor. What we have done, our heart-blood shall maintain.

War. Think you that we can brook this upstart's pride?

K. Edw. Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech.

A. of Cant. Why are you moved? be patient, my lord
And see what we your counsellors have done.

Y. Mor. My lords, now let us all be resolute,
And either have our wills, or lose our lives.

K. Edw. Meet you for this, proud overbearing peers?
Ere my sweet Gaveston shall part from me,

This isle shall fleet¹ upon the ocean,
And wander to the unfrequented Inde.

A. of Cant. You know that I am legate to the Pope ;

¹ Float.

On your allegiance to the see of Rome,
Subscribe, as we have done, to his exile.

Y. Mor. Curse him, if he refuse; and then may we
Depose him and elect another king.

K. Edw. Ay, there it goes! but yet I will not yield:
Curse me, depose me, do the worst you can.

Lan. Then linger not, my lord, but do it straight.

A. of Cant. Remember how the bishop was abused!
Either banish him that was the cause thereof,
Or I will presently discharge these lords
Of duty and allegiance due to thee.

K. Edw. It boots me not to threat — I must speak fair:
The legate of the Pope will be obeyed. [Aside.]

My lord, you shall be Chancellor of the realm;
Thou, Lancaster, High Admiral of our fleet;
Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be earls;
And you, Lord Warwick, President of the North;
And thou of Wales. If this content you not,
Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
And share it equally amongst you all,
So I may have some nook or corner left,
To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.

A. of Cant. Nothing shall alter us — we are resolved.

Lan. Come, come, subscribe.

Y. Mor. Why should you love him whom the world hates so?

K. Edw. Because he loves me more than all the world.

Ah, none but rude and savage-minded men
Would seek the ruin of my Gaveston;
You that be noble-born should pity him.

War. You that are princely-born should shake him off:
For shame, subscribe, and let the lown depart.

E. Mor. Urge him, my lord.

A. of Cant. Are you content to banish him the realm?

K. Edw. I see I must, and therefore am content:
Instead of ink I'll write it with my tears. [Subscribes.]

Y. Mor. The king is love-sick for his minion.

K. Edw. 'Tis done — and now, accursèd hand, fall off!

Lan. Give it me — I'll have it published in the streets.

Y. Mor. I'll see him presently despatched away.

A. of Cant. Now is my heart at ease.

War. And so is mine.

Pem. This will be good news to the common sort.

E. Mor. Be it or no, he shall not linger here.

[Exeunt all except KING EDWARD.]

K. Edw. How fast they run to banish him I love!

They would not stir, were it to do me good.
Why should a king be subject to a priest?
Proud Rome ! that hatchest such imperial grooms,
For these thy superstitious taper-lights,
Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
I'll fire thy crazed buildings, and enforce
The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground !
With slaughtered priests make Tiber's channel swell,
And banks raised higher with their sepulchres !
As for the peers, that back the clergy thus,
If I be king, not one of them shall live.

Re-enter GAVESTON.

Gav. My lord, I hear it whispered everywhere,
That I am banished, and must fly the land.

K. Edw. 'Tis true, sweet Gaveston — O ! were it false !
The legate of the Pope will have it so,
And thou must hence, or I shall be deposed.
But I will reign to be revenged of them ;
And therefore, sweet friend, take it patiently.
Live where thou wilt, I'll send thee gold enough ;
And long thou shalt not stay, or if thou dost,
I'll come to thee ; my love shall ne'er decline.

Gav. Is all my hope turned to this hell of grief?

K. Edw. Rend not my heart with thy too-piercing words :
Thou from this land, I from myself am banished.

Gav. To go from hence grieves not poor Gaveston ;
But to forsake you, in whose gracious looks
The blessedness of Gaveston remains :
For nowhere else seeks he felicity.

K. Edw. And only this torments my wretched soul
That, whether I will or no, thou must depart.
Be governor of Ireland in my stead,
And there abide till fortune call thee home.
Here take my picture, and let me wear thine ;

[They exchange pictures.]

O, might I keep thee here as I do this,
Happy were I ! but now most miserable !

Gav. 'Tis something to be pitied of a king.

K. Edw. Thou shalt not hence — I'll hide thee, Gaveston.

Gav. I shall be found, and then 'twill grieve me more.

K. Edw. Kind words and mutual talk makes our grief
greater :

Therefore, with dumb embracement, let us part —
Stay, Gaveston, I can not leave thee thus.

Gav. For every look, my love ¹ drops down a tear:
Seeing I must go, do not renew my sorrow.

K. Edw. The time is little that thou hast to stay,
And, therefore, give me leave to look my fill:
But come, sweet friend, I'll bear thee on thy way.

Gav. The peers will frown.

K. Edw. I pass ² not for their anger — Come, let's go;
O that we might as well return as go.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. Whither goes my lord?

K. Edw. Fawn not on me, French strumpet! get thee gone!

Q. Isab. On whom but on my husband should I fawn?

Gav. On Mortimer! with whom, ungente queen —
I say no more — judge you the rest, my lord.

Q. Isab. In saying this, thou wrong'st me, Gaveston;
Is't not enough that thou corrupt'st my lord,
And art a bawd to his affections,
But thou must call mine honour thus in question?

Gav. I mean not so; your grace must pardon me.

K. Edw. Thou art too familiar with that Mortimer,
And by thy means is Gaveston exiled;
But I would wish thee reconcile the lords,
Or thou shalt ne'er be reconciled to me.

Q. Isab. Your highness knows it lies not in my power.

K. Edw. Away then! touch me not — Come, Gaveston.

Q. Isab. Villain! 'tis thou that robb'st me of my lord.

Gav. Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord.

K. Edw. Speak not unto her; let her droop and pine.

Q. Isab. Wherein, my lord, have I deserved these words?
Witness the tears that Isabella sheds,
Witness this heart, that sighing for thee, breaks,
How dear my lord is to poor Isabel.

K. Edw. And witness Heaven how dear thou art to me:
There weep: for till my Gaveston be repealed,
Assure thyself thou com'st not in my sight.

[*Exeunt EDWARD and GAVESTON.*]

Q. Isab. O miserable and distressed queen!
Would, when I left sweet France and was embarked,
That charming Circe walking on the waves,
Had changed my shape, or at the marriage-day
The cup of Hymen had been full of poison,
Or with those arms that twined about my neck

¹ "Lord" in the old editions; altered by Dyce to "love."

² Care.

I had been stifled, and not lived to see
The king my lord thus to abandon me !
Like frantic Juno will I fill the earth
With ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries ;
For never doated Jove on Ganymede
So much as he on cursèd Gaveston :
But that will more exasperate his wrath ;
I must entreat him, I must speak him fair ;
And be a means to call home Gaveston :
And yet he'll ever doat on Gaveston ;
And so am I for ever miserable.

Re-enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *the* Elder MORTIMER,
and Young MORTIMER.

Lan. Look where the sister of the King of France
Sits wringing of her hands, and beats her breast !

War. The king, I fear, hath ill-entreated her.

Pem. Hard is the heart that injuries such a saint.

Y. Mor. I know 'tis 'long of Gaveston she weeps.

E. Mor. Why, he is gone.

Y. Mor. Madam, how fares your grace ?

Q. Isab. Ah, Mortimer ! now breaks the king's hate forth,
And he confesseth that he loves me not.

Y. Mor. Cry quittance, madam, then ; and love not him.

Q. Isab. No, rather will I die a thousand deaths :
And yet I love in vain ; — he'll ne'er love me.

Lan. Fear ye not, madam ; now his minion's gone,
His wanton humour will be quickly left.

Q. Isab. O never, Lancaster ! I am enjoined
To sue upon you all for his repeal ;

This wills my lord, and this must I perform,
Or else be banished from his highness' presence.

Lan. For his repeal, madam ! he comes not back,
Unless the sea cast up his shipwrecked body.

War. And to behold so sweet a sight as that,
There's none here but would run his horse to death.

Y. Mor. But, madam, would you have us call him home ?

Q. Isab. Ay, Mortimer, for till he be restored,
The angry king hath banished me the court ;
And, therefore, as thou lov'st and tender'st me,
Be thou my advocate unto these peers.

Y. Mor. What ! would you have me plead for Gaveston ?

E. Mor. Plead for him that will, I am resolved.

Lan. And so am I, my lord : dissuade the queen.

Q. Isab. O Lancaster ! let him dissuade the king.

For 'tis against my will he should return.

War. Then speak not for him, let the peasant go.

Q. Isab. 'Tis for myself I speak, and not for him.

Pem. No speaking will prevail, and therefore cease.

Y. Mor. Fair queen, forbear to angle for the fish
Which, being caught, strikes him that takes it dead ;
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now, I hope, floats on the Irish seas.

Q. Isab. Sweet Mortimer, sit down by me awhile,
And I will tell thee reasons of such weight
As thou wilt soon subscribe to his repeal.

Y. Mor. It is impossible ; but speak your mind.

Q. Isab. Then thus, but none shall hear it but ourselves.

[*Talks to Young MORTIMER apart.*]

Lan. My lords, albeit the queen win Mortimer,
Will you be resolute, and hold with me ?

E. Mor. Not I, against my nephew.

Pem. Fear not, the queen's words can not alter him.

War. No ? do but mark how earnestly she pleads !

Lan. And see how coldly his looks make denial !

War. She smiles ; now for my life his mind is changed !

Lan. I'll rather lose his friendship, I, than grant.

Y. Mor. Well, of necessity it must be so.

My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston,
I hope your honours make no question,
And therefore, though I plead for his repeal,
'Tis not for his sake, but for our avail ;
Nay for the realm's behoof, and for the king's.

Lan. Fie, Mortimer, dishonour not thyself !
Can this be true, 'twas good to banish him ?
And is this true, to call him home again ?
Such reasons make white black, and dark night day.

Y. Mor. My lord of Lancaster, mark the respect.¹

Lan. In no respect can contraries be true.

Q. Isab. Yet, good my lord, hear what he can allege.

War. All that he speaks is nothing ; we are resolved.

Y. Mor. Do you not wish that Gaveston were dead ?

Pem. I would he were !

Y. Mor. Why then, my lord, give me but leave to speak.

E. Mor. But, nephew, do not play the sophister.

Y. Mor. This which I urge is of a burning zeal
To mend the king, and do our country good.
Know you not Gaveston hath store of gold,
Which may in Ireland purchase him such friends

¹ Consideration.

As he will front the mightiest of us all?
And whereas he shall live and be beloved,
'Tis hard for us to work his overthrow.

War. Mark you but that, my lord of Lancaster.

Y. Mor. But were he here, detested as he is,
How easily might some base slave be suborned
To greet his lordship with a poniard,
And none so much as blame the murderer,
But rather praise him for that brave attempt,
And in the chronicle enrol his name
For purging of the realm of such a plague!

Pem. He saith true.

Lan. Ay, but how chance this was not done before?

Y. Mor. Because, my lords, it was not thought upon.
Nay, more, when he shall know it lies in us
To banish him, and then to call him home,
'Twill make him vail¹ the top-flag of his pride,
And fear to offend the meanest nobleman.

E. Mor. But how if he do not, nephew?

Y. Mor. Then may we with some colour rise in arms;
For howsoever we have borne it out,
'Tis treason to be up against the king;
So we shall have the people of our side,
Which for his father's sake lean to the king,
But can not brook a night-grown mushroom,
Such a one as my lord of Cornwall is,
Should bear us down of the nobility.
And when the commons and the nobles join,
'Tis not the king can buckler Gaveston;
We'll pull him from the strongest hold he hath.
My lords, if to perform this I be slack,
Think me as base a groom as Gaveston.

Lan. On that condition, Lancaster will grant.

Pem. And so will Pembroke.

War. And I.

E. Mor. And I.

Y. Mor. In this I count me highly gratified,
And Mortimer will rest at your command.

Q. Isab. And when this favour Isabel forgets,
Then let her live abandoned and forlorn.—
But see, in happy time, my lord the king,
Having brought the Earl of Cornwall on his way,
Is new returned; this news will glad him much;
Yet not so much as me; I love him more

¹ Lower.

Than he can Gaveston ; would he love me
But half so much, then were I treble-blessed !

Re-enter KING EDWARD, mourning.

K. Edw. He's gone, and for his absence thus I mourn.
Did never sorrow go so near my heart
As doth the want of my sweet Gaveston ;
And could my crown's revenue bring him back,
I would freely give it to his enemies,
And think I gained, having bought so dear a friend.

Q. Isab. Hark ! how he harps upon his minion.

K. Edw. My heart is an anvil unto sorrow,
Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
And with the noise turns up my giddy brain,
And makes me frantic for my Gaveston.
Ah ! had some bloodless Fury rose from hell,
And with my kingly sceptre struck me dead,
When I was forced to leave my Gaveston !

Lan. Diablo ! What passions call you these ?

Q. Isab. My gracious lord, I come to bring you news.

K. Edw. That you have parleyed with your Mortimer !

Q. Isab. That Gaveston, my lord, shall be repealed.

K. Edw. Repealed ! the news is too sweet to be true !

Q. Isab. But will you love me, if you find it so ?

K. Edw. If it be so, what will not Edward do ?

Q. Isab. For Gaveston, but not for Isabel.

K. Edw. For thee, fair queen, if thou lov'st Gaveston ;
I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck,
Seeing thou hast pleaded with so good success.

Q. Isab. No other jewels hang about my neck
Than these, my lord ; nor let me have more wealth
Than I may fetch from this rich treasury —
O how a kiss revives poor Isabel !

K. Edw. Once more receive my hand ; and let this be
A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me.

Q. Isab. And may it prove more happy than the first !
My gentle lord, bespeak these nobles fair,
That wait attendance for a gracious look,
And on their knees salute your majesty.

K. Edw. Courageous Lancaster, embrace thy king !
And, as gross vapours perish by the sun,
Even so let hatred with thy sovereign's smile.
Live thou with me as my companion.

Lan. This salutation overjoys my heart.

K. Edw. Warwick shall be my chiefest counsellor :

These silver hairs will more adorn my court
Than gaudy silks, or rich embroidery.

Chide me, sweet Warwick, if I go astray.

War. Slay me, my lord, when I offend your grace.

K. Edw. In solemn triumphs, and in public shows,
Pembroke shall bear the sword before the king.

Pem. And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you.

K. Edw. But wherefore walks young Mortimer aside?
Be thou commander of our royal fleet;
Or, if that lofty office like thee not,
I make thee here Lord Marshal of the realm.

Y. Mor. My lord, I'll marshal so your enemies,
As England shall be quiet, and you safe.

K. Edw. And as for you, Lord Mortimer of Chirke,
Whose great achievements in our foreign war
Deserves no common place, nor mean reward;
Be you the general of the levied troops,
That now are ready to assail the Scots.

E. Mor. In this your grace hath highly honoured me,
For with my nature war doth best agree.

Q. Isab. Now is the King of England rich and strong,
Having the love of his renowned peers.

K. Edw. Ay, Isabel, ne'er was my heart so light.
Clerk of the crown, direct our warrant forth
For Gaveston to Ireland:

Enter BEAUMONT with warrant.

Beaumont, fly

As fast as Iris or Jove's Mercury.

Bea. It shall be done, my gracious lord. [Exit.]

K. Edw. Lord Mortimer, we leave you to your charge.
Now let us in, and feast it royally.

Against our friend the Earl of Cornwall comes,
We'll have a general tilt and tournament;
And then his marriage shall be solemnised.
For wot you not that I have made him sure
Unto our cousin, the Earl of Gloucester's heir?

Lan. Such news we hear, my lord.

K. Edw. That day, if not for him, yet for my sake,
Who in the triumph will be challenger,
Spare for no cost: we will requit your love.

War. In this, or aught your highness shall command us.

K. Edw. Thanks, gentle Warwick: come, let's in and revel.

[Exeunt all except the MORTIMERS.]

¹ Affianced him.

E. Mor. Nephew, I must to Scotland ; thou stayest here.
 Leave now t'oppose thyself against the king.
 Thou seest by nature he is mild and calm,
 And, seeing his mind so doats on Gaveston,
 Let him without controulment have his will.
 The mightiest kings have had their minions :
 Great Alexander loved Hephestion ;
 The conquering Hercules for Hylas wept ;
 And for Patroclus stern Achilles drooped ;
 And not kings only, but the wisest men :
 The Roman Tully loved Octavius ;
 Grave Socrates wild Alcibiades.
 Then let his grace, whose youth is flexible,
 And promiseth as much as we can wish,
 Freely enjoy that vain, light-headed earl ;
 For riper years will wean him from such toys.

Y. Mor. Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me ;
 But this I scorn, that one so basely born
 Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
 And riot it with the treasure of the realm.
 While soldiers mutiny for want of pay,
 He wears a lord's revenue on his back,
 And Midas-like, he jets ¹ it in the court,
 With base outlandish cullions ² at his heels,
 Whose proud fantastic liveries make such show,
 As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appeared.
 I have not seen a dapper Jack so brisk ;
 He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
 Larded with pearl, and, in his Tuscan cap,
 A jewel of more value than the crown.
 While others walk below, the king and he
 From out a window laugh at such as we,
 And flout our train, and jest at our attire.
 Uncle, 'tis this makes me impatient.

E. Mor. But, nephew, now you see the king is changed.

Y. Mor. Then so am I, and live to do him service :
 But whiles I have a sword, a hand, a heart,
 I will not yield to any such upstart.
 You know my mind ; come, uncle, let's away.

[*Exeunt.*]

¹ Struts, Fr., *fetter*.

² Scoundrels.

ACT II

SCENE I. — A HALL IN GLOUCESTER HOUSE

Enter Young SPENCER and BALDOCK.

BALD. Spencer,
Seeing that our lord the earl of Gloucester's dead,
Which of the nobles dost thou mean to serve?

Y. Spen. Not Mortimer, nor any of his side ;
Because the king and he are enemies.

Baldock, learn this of me, a factious lord
Shall hardly do himself good, much less us ;
But he that hath the favour of a king
May with one word advance us while we live :
The liberal Earl of Cornwall is the man
On whose good fortune Spencer's hopes depends.

Bald. What, mean you then to be his follower?

Y. Spen. No, his companion ; for he loves me well,
And would have once preferred me to the king.

Bald. But he is banished ; there's small hope of him.

Y. Spen. Ay, for a while ; but, Baldock, mark the end.
A friend of mine told me in secrecy
That he's repealed, and sent for back again ;
And even now a post came from the court
With letters to our lady from the king ;
And as she read she smiled, which makes me think
It is about her lover Gaveston.

Bald. 'Tis like enough ; for since he was exiled
She neither walks abroad, nor comes in sight.
But I had thought the match had been broke off,
And that his banishment had changed her mind.

Y. Spen. Our lady's first love is not wavering ;
My life for thine, she will have Gaveston.

Bald. Then hope I by her means to be preferred,
Having read unto her since she was a child.

Y. Spen. Then, Baldock, you must cast the scholar off,
And learn to court it like a gentleman.
'Tis not a black coat and a little band,
A velvet-caped coat, faced before with serge,
And smelling to a nosegay all the day,
Or holding of a napkin in your hand,
Or saying a long grace at a table's end,
Or making low legs to a nobleman,
Or looking downward with your eyelids close,

And saying, "Truly, an't may please your honour,"
Can get you any favour with great men ;
You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute,
And now and then stab, as occasion serves.

Bald. Spencer, thou know'st I hate such formal toys,
And use them but of mere hypocrisy.
Mine old lord while he lived was so precise,
That he would take exceptions at my buttons,
And being like pin's heads, blame me for the bigness ;
Which made me curate-like in mine attire,
Though inwardly licentious enough,
And apt for any kind of villany.
I am none of these common pedants, I,
That can not speak without *propterea quod*.

Y. Spen. But one of those that saith, *quandoquidem*,
And hath a special gift to form a verb.

Bald. Leave off this jesting, here my lady comes.

Enter KING EDWARD'S Niece

Niece. The grief for his exile was not so much,
As is the joy of his returning home.
This letter came from my sweet Gaveston :
What need'st thou, love, thus to excuse thyself ?
I know thou could'st not come and visit me :
[*Reads.*] "I will not long be from thee, though I die."
This argues the entire love of my lord ;
[*Reads.*] "When I forsake thee, death seize on my heart :"
But stay thee here where Gaveston shall sleep.

[*Puts the letter into her bosom.*]

Now to the letter of my lord the king.—
He wills me to repair unto the court,
And meet my Gaveston? Why do I stay,
Seeing that he talks thus of my marriage-day?
Who's there? Baldock !
See that my coach be ready, I must hence.

Bald. It shall be done, madam.

Niece. And meet me at the park-pale presently.

[*Exit BALDOCK.*]

Spencer, stay you and bear me company,
For I have joyful news to tell thee of ;
My Lord of Cornwall is a-coming over,
And will be at the court as soon as we.

Y. Spen. I knew the king would have him home again.

Niece. If all things sort ' out, as I hope they will,

Thy service, Spencer, shall be thought upon.

Y. Spen. I humbly thank your ladyship.

Niece. Come, lead the way; I long till I am there.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—TYNEMOUTH

Enter KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, KENT, LANCASTER, Young MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. The wind is good, I wonder why he stays;
I fear me he is wrecked upon the sea.

Q. Isab. Look, Lancaster, how passionate¹ he is,
And still his mind runs on his minion!

Lan. My lord, —

K. Edw. How now! what news? is Gaveston arrived?

Y. Mor. Nothing but Gaveston! what means your grace?
You have matters of more weight to think upon;
The King of France sets foot in Normandy.

K. Edw. A trifle! we'll expel him when we please.
But tell me, Mortimer, what's thy device
Against the stately triumph we decreed?

Y. Mor. A homely one, my lord, not worth the telling.

K. Edw. Pray thee let me know it.

Y. Mor. But, seeing you are so desirous, thus it is:
A lofty cedar-tree, fair flourishing,
On whose top-branches kingly eagles perch,
And by the bark a canker creeps me up,
And gets into the highest bough of all:
The motto, *Æque tandem*.

K. Edw. And what is yours, my lord of Lancaster?

Lan. My lord, mine's more obscure than Mortimer's.
Pliny reports there is a flying fish
Which all the other fishes deadly hate,
And therefore, being pursued, it takes the air:
No sooner is it up, but there's a fowl
That seizeth it; this fish, my lord, I bear,
The motto this: *Undique mors est*.

Kent. Proud Mortimer! ungentle Lancaster!
Is this the love you bear your sovereign?
Is this the fruit your reconciliation bears?
Can you in words make show of amity,
And in your shields display your rancorous minds!
What call you this but private libelling
Against the Earl of Cornwall and my brother?

¹ Sorrowful.

Q. Isab. Sweet husband, be content, they all love you.

K. Edw. They love me not that hate my Gaveston.

I am that cedar, shake me not too much ;
And you the eagles ; soar ye ne'er so high,
I have the jesses¹ that will pull you down ;
And *Æque tandem* shall that canker cry
Unto the proudest peer of Brittainy.

Though thou compar'st him to a flying fish,
And threatenest death whether he rise or fall,
'Tis not the hugest monster of the sea,
Nor foulest harpy that shall swallow him.

Y. Mor. If in his absence thus he favours him,
What will he do whenas he shall be present?

Lan. That shall we see ; look where his lordship comes.

Enter GAVESTON.

K. Edw. My Gaveston !

Welcome to Tynemouth ! welcome to thy friend !
Thy absence made me droop and pine away ;
For, as the lovers of fair Danae,
When she was locked up in a brazen tower
Desired her more, and waxed outrageous,
So did it fare with me : and now thy sight
Is sweeter far than was thy parting hence
Bitter and irksome to my sobbing heart.

Gav. Sweet lord and king, your speech preventeth² mine,
Yet have I words left to express my joy :
The shepherd nipt with biting winter's rage
Frolics not more to see the painted spring,
Than I do to behold your majesty.

K. Edw. Will none of you salute my Gaveston ?

Lan. Salute him ? yes ; welcome, Lord Chamberlain !

Y. Mor. Welcome is the good Earl of Cornwall !

War. Welcome, Lord Governor of the Isle of Man !

Pem. Welcome, Master Secretary !

Kent. Brother, do you hear them ?

K. Edw. Still will these earls and barons use me thus.

Gav. My lord, I can not brook these injuries.

Q. Isab. Ay me, poor soul, when these begin to jar. [*Aside.*]

K. Edw. Return it to their throats, I'll be thy warrant.

Gav. Base, leaden earls, that glory in your birth,
Go sit at home and eat your tenants' beef ;

¹ The straps round a hawk's legs, with rings attached, to which the falconer's leash was fastened.

² Anticipateth.

And come not here to scoff at Gaveston,
Whose mounting thoughts did never creep so low
As to bestow a look on such as you.

Lan. Yet I disdain not to do this for you.

[*Draws his sword and offers to stab GAVESTON.*]

K. Edw. Treason! treason! where's the traitor?

Pem. Here! here!

K. Edw. Convey hence Gaveston; they'll murder him.

Gav. The life of thee shall salve this foul disgrace.

Y. Mor. Villain! thy life, unless I miss mine aim.

[*Wounds GAVESTON.*]

Q. Isab. Ah! furious Mortimer, what hast thou done?

Y. Mor. No more than I would answer, were he slain.

[*Exit GAVESTON with Attendants.*]

K. Edw. Yes, more than thou canst answer, though he live;
Dear shall you both abide this riotous deed.

Out of my presence! come not near the court.

Y. Mor. I'll not be barred the court for Gaveston.

Lan. We'll hale him by the ears unto the block.

K. Edw. Look to your own heads; his is sure enough.

War. Look to your own crown, if you back him thus.

Kent. Warwick, these words do ill beseech my years.

K. Edw. Nay, all of them conspire to cross me thus;

But if I live, I'll tread upon their heads

That think with high looks thus to tread me down.

Come, Edmund, let's away and levy men,

'Tis war that must abate these barons' pride.

[*Excunt KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, and KENT.*]

War. Let's to our castles, for the king is moved.

Y. Mor. Moved may he be, and perish in his wrath!

Lan. Cousin, it is no dealing with him now,

He means to make us stoop by force of arms;

And therefore let us jointly here protest,

To persecute that Gaveston to the death.

Y. Mor. By heaven, the abject villain shall not live!

War. I'll have his blood, or die in seeking it.

Pem. The like oath Pembroke takes.

Lan. And so doth Lancaster.

Now send our heralds to defy the king;

And make the people swear to put him down.

Enter a Messenger.

Y. Mor. Letters! from whence?

Mess. From Scotland, my lord.

[*Giving letters to MORTIMER.*]

Lan. Why, how now, cousin, how fares all our friends?

Y. Mor. My uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.

Lan. We'll have him ransomed, man; be of good cheer.

Y. Mor. They rate his ransom at five thousand pound.

Who should defray the money but the king,

Seeing he is taken prisoner in his wars?

I'll to the king.

Lan. Do, cousin, and I'll bear thee company.

War. Meantime, my lord of Pembroke and myself
Will to Newcastle here, and gather head.

Y. Mor. About it then, and we will follow you.

Lan. Be resolute and full of secrecy.

War. I warrant you. [Exit with PEMBROKE.

Y. Mor. Cousin, and if he will not ransom him,

I'll thunder such a peal into his ears,

As never subject did unto his king.

Lan. Content, I'll bear my part — Holla! who's there?

Enter GUARD.

Y. Mor. Ay, marry, such a guard as this doth well.

Lan. Lead on the way.

Guard. Whither will your lordships?

Y. Mor. Whither else but to the king.

Guard. His highness is disposed to be alone.

Lan. Why, so he may, but we will speak to him.

Guard. You may not in, my lord.

Y. Mor. May we not?

Enter KING EDWARD and KENT.

K. Edw. How now!

What noise is this? who have we there, is't you? [Going.

Y. Mor. Nay, stay, my lord, I come to bring you news;

Mine uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.

K. Edw. Then ransom him.

Lan. 'Twas in your wars; you should ransom him.

Y. Mor. And you shall ransom him, or else —

Kent. What! Mortimer, you will not threaten him?

K. Edw. Quiet yourself, you shall have the broad seal,
To gather for him throughout the realm.

Lan. Your minion Gaveston hath taught you this.

Y. Mor. My lord, the family of the Mortimers

Are not so poor but, would they sell their land,

'Twould levy men enough to anger you.

We never beg, but use such prayers as these.

K. Edw. Shall I still be haunted thus?

Y. Mor. Nay, now you're here alone, I'll speak my mind.

Lan. And so will I, and then, my lord, farewell.

Y. Mor. The idle triumphs, masks, lascivious shows,
And prodigal gifts bestowed on Gaveston,
Have drawn thy treasury dry, and made thee weak ;
The murmuring commons, overstretched, break.

Lan. Look for rebellion, look to be deposed ;
Thy garrisons are beaten out of France,
And, lame and poor, lie groaning at the gates.
The wild Oneyl, with swarms of Irish kerns,¹
Lives uncontrolled within the English pale.
Unto the walls of York the Scots make road,²
And unresisted drive away rich spoils.

Y. Mor. The haughty Dane commands the narrow seas,
While in the harbour ride thy ships unrigged.

Lan. What foreign prince sends thee ambassadors ?

Y. Mor. Who loves thee, but a sort of flatterers ?

Lan. Thy gentle queen, sole sister to Valois,
Complains that thou hast left her all forlorn.

Y. Mor. Thy court is naked, being bereft of those
That make a king seem glorious to the world ;
I mean the peers, whom thou should'st dearly love :
Libels are cast again thee in the street :
Ballads and rhymes made of thy overthrow.

Lan. The Northern borderers, seeing their houses burnt,
Their wives and children slain, run up and down,
Cursing the name of thee and Gaveston.

Y. Mor. When wert thou in the field with banner spread,
But once ? and then thy soldiers marched like players,
With garish robes, not armour ; and thyself,
Bedaubed with gold, rode laughing at the rest,
Nodding and shaking of thy spangled crest,
Where women's favours hung like labels down.

Lan. And therefore came it, that the fleering³ Scots,
To England's high disgrace, have made this jig⁴ ;

“ Maids of England, sore may you mourn, —

For your lemans⁵ you have lost at Bannocksbourne, —
With a heave and a ho !

What weeneth the King of England,

So soon to have won Scotland ? —

With a rombelow ! ”

¹ Foot soldiers.

² Inroad.

³ Jeering.

⁴ This jig or ballad is taken, with slight variations, from Fabyan's *Chronicle*.
At the time the scene refers to, the battle of Bannockburn had not been fought.

⁵ Lovers.

Y. Mor. Wigmore shall fly,¹ to set my uncle free.

Lan. And when 'tis gone, our swords shall purchase more.
If ye be moved, revenge it as you can;
Look next to see us with our ensigns spread.

[*Exit with Young MORTIMER.*

K. Edw. My swelling heart for very anger breaks!
How oft have I been baited by these peers,
And dare not be revenged, for their power is great!
Yet, shall the crowing of these cockerels
Affright a lion? Edward, unfold thy paws,
And let their lives' blood slake thy fury's hunger.
If I be cruel and grow tyrannous,
Now let them thank themselves, and rue too late.

Kent. My lord, I see your love to Gaveston
Will be the ruin of the realm and you,
For now the wrathful nobles threaten wars,
And therefore, brother, banish him for ever.

K. Edw. Art thou an enemy to my Gaveston?

Kent. Ay, and it grieves me that I favoured him.

K. Edw. Traitor, begone! whine thou with Mortimer.

Kent. So will I, rather than with Gaveston.

K. Edw. Out of my sight, and trouble me no more!

Kent. No marvel though thou scorn thy noble peers,
When I thy brother am rejected thus.

K. Edw. Away!

[*Exit KENT.*

Poor Gaveston, that has no friend but me,
Do what they can, we'll live in Tynemouth here,
And, so I walk with him about the walls,
What care I though the earls begirt us round?—
Here cometh she that's cause of all these jars.

*Enter QUEEN ISABELLA with KING EDWARD'S Niece, two Ladies,
GAVESTON, BALDOCK and Young SPENCER.*

Q. Isab. My lord, 'tis thought the earls are up in arms.

K. Edw. Ay, and 'tis likewise thought you favour 'em.

Q. Isab. Thus do you still suspect me without cause?

Niece. Sweet uncle! speak more kindly to the queen.

Gav. My lord, dissemble with her, speak her fair.

K. Edw. Pardon me, sweet, I had forgot myself.

Q. Isab. Your pardon is quickly got of Isabel.

K. Edw. The younger Mortimer is grown so brave,
That to my face he threatens civil wars.

Gav. Why do you not commit him to the Tower?

¹ Wigmore was the name of young Mortimer's estate.

K. Edw. I dare not, for the people love him well.

Gav. Why, then we'll have him privily made away.

K. Edw. Would Lancaster and he had both caroused
A bowl of poison to each other's health !

But let them go, and tell me what are these.

Niece. Two of my father's servants whilst he liv'd,—
May't please your grace to entertain them now.

K. Edw. Tell me, where wast thou born? what is thine
arms?

Bald. My name is Baldock, and my gentry
I fetch from Oxford, not from heraldry.

K. Edw. The fitter art thou, Baldock, for my turn.
Wait on me, and I'll see thou shall not want.

Bald. I humbly thank your majesty.

K. Edw. Knowest thou him, Gaveston?

Gav. Ay, my lord ;

His name is Spencer, he is well allied ;
For my sake, let him wait upon your grace ;
Scarce shall you find a man of more desert.

K. Edw. Then, Spencer, wait upon me ; for his sake
I'll grace thee with a higher style ere long.

Y. Spen. No greater titles happen unto me,
Than to be favoured of your majesty !

K. Edw. Cousin, this day shall be your marriage feast.
And, Gaveston, think that I love thee well,
To wed thee to our niece, the only heir
Unto the Earl of Gloucester late deceased.

Gav. I know, my lord, many will stomach me,
But I respect neither their love nor hate.

K. Edw. The headstrong barons shall not limit me ;
He that I list to favour shall be great.
Come, let's away ; and when the marriage ends,
Have at the rebels, and their 'complices !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—NEAR TYNEMOUTH CASTLE

Enter KENT, LANCASTER, YOUNG MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE,
and others.

Kent. My lords, of love to this our native land
I come to join with you and leave the king ;
And in your quarrel and the realm's behoof
Will be the first that shall adventure life.

Lan. I fear me, you are sent of policy,
To undermine us with a show of love.

War. He is your brother, therefore have we cause

To cast ¹ the worst, and doubt of your revolt.

Kent. Mine honour shall be hostage of my truth :
If that will not suffice, farewell, my lords.

Y. Mor. Stay, Edmund ; never was Plantagenet
False of his word, and therefore trust we thee.

Pem. But what's the reason you should leave him now ?

Kent. I have informed the Earl of Lancaster.

Lan. And it sufficeth. Now, my lords, know this,
That Gaveston is secretly arrived,
And here in Tynemouth frolics with the king.
Let us with these our followers scale the walls,
And suddenly surprise them unawares,

Y. Mor. I'll give the onset.

War. And I'll follow thee.

Y. Mor. This tottered ² ensign of my ancestors,
Which swept the desert shore of that dead ³ sea
Whereof we got the name of Mortimer,
Will I advance upon this castle's walls.
Drums, strike alarum, raise them from their sport,
And ring aloud the knell of Gaveston !

Lan. None be so hardy as to touch the king ;
But neither spare you Gaveston nor his friends.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—IN TYNEMOUTH CASTLE

Enter severally KING EDWARD and Young SPENCER.

K. Edw. O tell me, Spencer, where is Gaveston ?

Spem. I fear me he is slain, my gracious lord.

K. Edw. No, here he comes ; now let them spoil and kill.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, KING EDWARD'S Niece, GAVESTON, and Nobles.

Fly, fly, my lords, the earls have got the hold ;
Take shipping and away to Scarborough ;
Spencer and I will post away by land.

Gav. O stay, my lord, they will not injure you.

K. Edw. I will not trust them ; Gaveston, away !

Gav. Farewell, my lord,

K. Edw. Lady, farewell.

Niece. Farewell, sweet uncle, till we meet again.

K. Edw. Farewell, sweet Gaveston ; and farewell, niece.

Q. Isab. No farewell to poor Isabel thy queen ?

¹ Conjecture.

² Tattered.

³ In all Latin deeds the Mortimers are called "de Mortuo mari."—*Cunningham.*

K. Edw. Yes, yes, for Mortimer, your lover's sake.

Q. Isab. Heaven can witness I love none but you :

[*Exeunt all but* QUEEN ISABELLA.

From my embracements thus he breaks away.

O that mine arms could close this isle about,

That I might pull him to me where I would !

Or that these tears, that drizzle from mine eyes,

Had power to mollify his stony heart,

That when I had him we might never part.

Enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, YOUNG MORTIMER, and others.

Alarums within.

Lan. I wonder how he 'scaped !

Y. Mor. Who's this? the queen !

Q. Isab. Ay, Mortimer, the miserable queen,
Whose pining heart her inward sighs have blasted,

And body with continual mourning wasted :

These hands are tired with haling of my lord

From Gaveston, from wicked Gaveston,

And all in vain ; for, when I speak him fair,

He turns away, and smiles upon his minion.

Y. Mor. Cease to lament, and tell us where's the king?

Q. Isab. What would you with the king? is't him you seek?

Lan. No, madam, but that cursèd Gaveston.

Far be it from the thought of Lancaster

To offer violence to his sovereign.

We would but rid the realm of Gaveston :

Tell us where he remains, and he shall die.

Q. Isab. He's gone by water unto Scarborough ;

Pursue him quickly, and he can not 'scape ;

The king hath left him, and his train is small.

War. Foreslow ' no time, sweet Lancaster ; let's march.

Y. Mor. How comes it that the king and he is parted?

Q. Isab. That thus your army, going several ways,
Might be of lesser force : and with the power

That he intendeth presently to raise,

Be easily suppressed ; therefore be gone.

Y. Mor. Here in the river rides a Flemish hoy ;

Let's all aboard, and follow him amain.

Lan. The wind that bears him hence will fill our sails :

Come, come aboard, 'tis but an hour's sailing.

Y. Mor. Madam, stay you within this castle here.

Q. Isab. No, Mortimer, I'll to my lord the king.

Y. Mor. Nay, rather sail with us to Scarborough.

¹ Delay.

Q. Isab. You know the king is so suspicious,
As if he hear I have but talked with you,
Mine honour will be called in question ;
And therefore, gentle Mortimer, be gone.

Y. Mor. Madam, I can not stay to answer you,
But think of Mortimer as he deserves.

[*Exeunt all except QUEEN ISABELLA*]

Q. Isab. So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer
As Isabel could live with thee for ever.
In vain I look for love at Edward's hand,
Whose eyes are fixed on none but Gaveston.
Yet once more I'll importune him with prayer :
If he be strange and not regard my words,
My son and I will over into France,
And to the king my brother there complain,
How Gaveston hath robbed me of his love :
But yet I hope my sorrows will have end,
And Gaveston this blessed day be slain.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—THE OPEN COUNTRY

Enter GAVESTON, pursued.

Gav. Yet, lusty lords, I have escaped your hands,
Your threats, your larums, and your hot pursuits ;
And though divorcèd from King Edward's eyes,
Yet liveth Pierce of Gaveston unsurprised,
Breathing, in hope (malgrado¹ all your beards,
That muster rebels thus against your king),
To see his royal sovereign once again.

*Enter WARWICK, LANCASTER, PEMBROKE, YOUNG MORTIMER, Soldiers,
JAMES, and other Attendants of PEMBROKE.*

War. Upon him, soldiers, take away his weapons.

Y. Mor. Thou proud disturber of thy country's peace,
Corrupter of thy king ; cause of these broils,
Base flatterer, yield ! and were it not for shame,
Shame and dishonour to a soldier's name,
Upon my weapon's point here should'st thou fall,
And welter in thy gore.

Lan. Monster of men !

That, like the Greekish strumpet,² trained to arms
And bloody wars so many valiant knights ;
Look for no other fortune, wretch, than death !
King Edward is not here to buckler thee.

¹ Ital., meaning "in spite of."

² Helen of Troy.

War. Lancaster, why talk'st thou to the slave?
Go, soldiers, take him hence, for, by my sword,
His head shall off; Gaveston, short warning
Shall serve thy turn: it is our country's cause,
That here severely we will execute
Upon thy person. Hang him at a bough.

Gav. My lord! —

War. Soldiers, have him away; —
But for thou wert the favourite of a king,
Thou shalt have so much honour at our hands¹ —

Gav. I thank you all, my lords: then I perceive,
That heading is one, and hanging is the other,
And death is all.

Enter ARUNDEL.

Lan. How now, my lord of Arundel?

Arun. My lords, King Edward greets you all by me.

War. Arundel, say your message.

Arun. His majesty,
Hearing that you had taken Gaveston,
Entreateth you by me, yet but he may
See him before he dies; for why, he says,
And sends you word, he knows that die he shall;
And if you gratify his grace so far,
He will be mindful of the courtesy.

War. How now!

Gav. Renowned Edward, how thy name
Revives poor Gaveston!

War. No, it needeth not;
Arundel, we will gratify the king
In other matters; he must pardon us in this.
Soldiers, away with him!

Gav. Why, my lord of Warwick,
Will not these delays beget my hopes?
I know it, lords, it is this life you aim at,
Yet grant King Edward this.

Y. Mor. Shalt thou appoint
What we shall grant? Soldiers, away with him:
Thus we'll gratify the king,
We'll send his head by thee; let him bestow
His tears on that, for that is all he gets
Of Gaveston, or else his senseless trunk.

Lan. Not so, my lords, lest he bestow more cost

¹ Dyce suggests that a line following this, in which Warwick says that Gaveston shall be *beheaded*, has dropped out.

In burying him than he hath ever earned.

Arun. My lords, it is his majesty's request,
And in the honour of a king he swears,
He will but talk with him, and send him back.

War. When? can you tell? Arundel, no; we wot,
He that the care of his realm remits,
And drives his nobles to these exigents
For Gaveston, will, if he sees him once,
Violate any promise to possess him.

Arun. Then if you will not trust his grace in keep,
My lords, I will be pledge for his return.

Y. Mor. 'Tis honourable in thee to offer this;
But for we know thou art a noble gentleman,
We will not wrong thee so, to make away
A true man for a thief.

Gav. How mean'st thou, Mortimer? that is over-base.

Y. Mor. Away, base groom, robber of king's renown!
Question with thy companions and mates.

Pem. My Lord Mortimer, and you, my lords, each one,
To gratify the king's request therein,
Touching the sending of this Gaveston,
Because his majesty so earnestly
Desires to see the man before his death,
I will upon mine honour undertake
To carry him, and bring him back again;
Provided this, that you my lord of Arundel
Will join with me.

War. Pembroke, what wilt thou do?
Cause yet more bloodshed? is it not enough
That we have taken him, but must we now
Leave him on "had I wist,"¹ and let him go?

Pem. My lords, I will not over-woo your honours,
But if you dare trust Pembroke with the prisoner,
Upon mine oath, I will return him back.

Arun. My lord of Lancaster, what say you in this?

Lan. Why, I say, let him go on Pembroke's word.

Pem. And you, Lord Mortimer?

Y. Mor. How say you, my lord of Warwick?

War. Nay, do your pleasures, I know how 'twill prove.

Pem. Then give him me.

Gav. Sweet sovereign, yet I come
To see thee ere I die.

War. Yet not perhaps,
If Warwick's wit and policy prevail.

[*Aside.*

¹ An exclamation implying repentance of a rash deed. — *Dyce*.

Y. Mor. My lord of Pembroke, we deliver him you ;
Return him on your honour. Sound, away !

[*Exeunt all except* PEMBROKE, ARUNDEL, GAVESTON,
JAMES, and other Attendants of PEMBROKE.]

Pem. My lord of Arundel, you shall go with me.
My house is not far hence ; out of the way
A little, but our men shall go along.

We that have pretty wenches to our wives,
Sir, must not come so near to baulk their lips.

Arun. 'Tis very kindly spoke, my lord of Pembroke ;
Your honour hath an adamant of power
To draw a prince.

Pem. So, my lord. Come hither, James :
I do commit this Gaveston to thee,
Be thou this night his keeper ; in the morning
We will discharge thee of thy charge : be gone.

Gav. Unhappy Gaveston, whither goest thou now ?

[*Exit with* JAMES and the other Attendants.

Horse-boy. My lord, we'll quickly be at Cobham. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I. — ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY

Enter GAVESTON mourning, JAMES, and other Attendants of PEMBROKE.

GAV. O treacherous Warwick ! thus to wrong thy friend.
James. I see it is your life these arms pursue.

Gav. Weaponless must I fall, and die in bands ?
O ! must this day be period of my life ?
Centre of all my bliss ! An ye be men,
Speed to the king.

Enter WARWICK and Soldiers.

War. My lord of Pembroke's men,
Strive you no longer — I will have that Gaveston.

James. Your lordship does dishonour to yourself,
And wrong our lord, your honourable friend.

War. No, James, it is my country's cause I follow.
Go, take the villain ; soldiers, come away.
We'll make quick work. Commend me to your master,
My friend, and tell him that I watched it well.
Come, let thy shadow ¹ parley with King Edward.

¹ Ghost.

Gav. Treacherous earl, shall I not see the king?
War. The king of Heaven perhaps, no other king.
 Away! [*Exeunt WARWICK and Soldiers with GAVESTON.*
James. Come, fellows, it booted not for us to strive,
 We will in haste go certify our lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. — NEAR BOROUGHBIDGE, YORKSHIRE

Enter KING EDWARD and Young SPENCER, BALDOCK, and Nobles of the KING's side, and Soldiers with drums and fifes.

K. Edw. I long to hear an answer from the barons
 Touching my friend, my dearest Gaveston.
 Ah! Spencer, not the riches of my realm
 Can ransom him! ah, he is marked to die!
 I know the malice of the younger Mortimer,
 Warwick I know is rough, and Lancaster
 Inexorable, and I shall never see
 My lovely Pierce of Gaveston again!
 The barons overbear me with their pride.

Y. Spen. Were I King Edward, England's sovereign,
 Son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain,
 Great Edward Longshanks' issue, would I bear
 These braves, this rage, and suffer uncontrolled
 These barons thus to beard me in my land,
 In mine own realm? My lord, pardon my speech:
 Did you retain your father's magnanimity,
 Did you regard the honour of your name,
 You would not suffer thus your majesty
 Be counterbuted of your nobility.
 Strike off their heads, and let them preach on poles!
 No doubt, such lessons they will teach the rest,
 As by their preachments they will profit much,
 And learn obedience to their lawful king.

Y. Edw. Yea, gentle Spencer, we have been too mild,
 Too kind to them; but now have drawn our sword,
 And if they send me not my Gaveston,
 We'll steel it on their crest, and poll their tops.

Bald. This haught resolve becomes your majesty,
 Not to be tied to their affection,
 As though your highness were a schoolboy still,
 And must be awed and governed like a child.

Enter the Elder SPENCER, with his truncheon and Soldiers.

E. Spen. Long live my sovereign, the noble Edward —
 In peace triumphant, fortunate in wars!

K. Edw. Welcome, old man, com'st thou in Edward's aid?
Then tell thy prince of whence, and what thou art.

E. Spen. Lo, with a band of bowmen and of pikes,
Brown bills and targeteers, four hundred strong,
Sworn to defend King Edward's royal right,
I come in person to your majesty,
Spencer, the father of Hugh Spencer there,
Bound to your highness everlastingly,
For favour done, in him, unto us all.

K. Edw. Thy father, Spencer?

Y. Spen. True, an it like your grace,
That pours, in lieu of all your goodness shown,
His life, my lord, before your princely feet.

K. Edw. Welcome ten thousand times, old man, again.
Spencer, this love, this kindness to thy king,
Argues thy noble mind and disposition.
Spencer, I here create thee Earl of Wiltshire,
And daily will enrich thee with our favour,
That, as the sunshine, shall reflect o'er thee.
Beside, the more to manifest our love,
Because we hear Lord Bruce doth sell his land,
And that the Mortimers are in hand withal,
Thou shalt have crowns of us t' outbid the barons:
And, Spencer, spare them not, lay it on.
Soldiers, a largess, and thrice welcome all!

Y. Spen. My lord, here comes the queen.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, and LEVUNE.

K. Edw. Madam, what news?

Q. Isab. News of dishonour, lord, and discontent.
Our friend Levune, faithful and full of trust,
Informeth us, by letters and by words,
That Lord Valois our brother, King of France,
Because your highness hath been slack in homage,
Hath seized Normandy into his hands.
These be the letters, this the messenger.

K. Edw. Welcome, Levune. Tush, Sib, if this be all,
Valois and I will soon be friends again. —
But to my Gaveston; shall I never see,
Never behold thee now? — Madam, in this matter,
We will employ you and your little son;
You shall go parley with the King of France. —
Boy, see you bear you bravely to the king,
And do your message with a majesty.

P. Edw. Commit not to my youth things of more weight

Than fits a prince so young as I to bear,
And fear not, lord and father, Heaven's great beams
On Atlas' shoulder shall not lie more safe,
Than shall your charge committed to my trust.

Q. Isab. Ah, boy! this towardness makes thy mother fear
Thou art not marked to many days on earth.

K. Edw. Madam, we will that you with speed be shipped,
And this our son; Levune shall follow you
With all the haste we can despatch him hence.
Choose of our lords to bear you company:
And go in peace, leave us in wars at home.

Q. Isab. Unnatural wars, where subjects brave their king;
God end them once! My lord, I take my leave,
To make my preparation for France.

[*Exit with PRINCE EDWARD.*]

Enter ARUNDEL.

K. Edw. What, Lord Arundel, dost thou come alone?

Arun. Yea, my good lord, for Gaveston is dead.

K. Edw. Ah, traitors! have they put my friend to death?
Tell me, Arundel, died he ere thou cam'st,
Or didst thou see my friend to take his death?

Arun. Neither, my lord; for as he was surprised,
Begirt with weapons and with enemies round,
I did your highness' message to them all;
Demanding him of them, entreating rather,
And said, upon the honour of my name,
That I would undertake to carry him
Unto your highness, and to bring him back.

K. Edw. And tell me, would the rebels deny me that?

Y. Spen. Proud recreants!

K. Edw. Yea, Spencer, traitors all.

Arun. I found them at the first inexorable;
The Earl of Warwick would not bide the hearing,
Mortimer hardly; Pembroke and Lancaster
Spake least: and when they flatly had denied,
Refusing to receive me pledge for him,
The Earl of Pembroke mildly thus bespake:
"My lords, because our sovereign sends for him,
And promiseth he shall be safe returned,
I will this undertake, to have him hence,
And see him re-delivered to your hands."

K. Edw. Well, and how fortunes it that he came not?

Y. Spen. Some treason, or some villany, was the cause.

Arun. The Earl of Warwick seized him on his way;

For being delivered unto Pembroke's men,
Their lord rode home thinking his prisoner safe ;
But ere he came, Warwick in ambush lay,
And bare him to his death ; and in a trench
Strake off his head, and marched unto the camp.

Y. Spen. A bloody part, flatly 'gainst law of arms !

K. Edw. O shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die !

Y. Spen. My lord, refer your vengeance to the sword
Upon these barons ; hearten up your men ;
Let them not unrevenged murder your friends !
Advance your standard, Edward, in the field,
And march to fire them from their starting holes.

K. Edw. [*kneeling*]. By earth, the common mother of us all,
By Heaven, and all the moving orbs thereof,
By this right hand, and by my father's sword,
And all the honours 'longing to my crown,
I will have heads, and lives for him, as many
As I have manors, castles, towns and towers ! —
Traacherous Warwick ! traitorous Mortimer !
If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
That you may drink your fill, and quaff in blood,
And stain my royal standard with the same,
That so my bloody colours may suggest
Remembrance of revenge immortally
On your accursèd traitorous progeny,
You villains, that have slain my Gaveston !
And in this place of honour and of trust,
Spencer, sweet Spencer, I adopt thee here :
And merely of our love we do create thee
Earl of Gloucester, and Lord Chamberlain,
Despite of times, despite of enemies.

[*Rises.*

Y. Spen. My lord, here's a messenger from the barons
Desires access unto your majesty.

K. Edw. Admit him near.

Enter the Herald, with his coat of arms.

Her. Long live King Edward, England's lawful lord !

K. Edw. So wish not they, I wis, that sent thee hither.
Thou com'st from Mortimer and his 'complices,
A ranker rout of rebels never was.
Well, say thy message.

Her. The barons up in arms, by me salute
Your highness with long life and happiness ;
And bid me say, as plainer to your grace,

That if without effusion of blood
 You will this grief have ease and remedy,
 That from your princely person you remove
 This Spencer, as a putrifying branch,
 That deads the royal vine, whose golden leaves
 Empale your princely head, your diadem,
 Whose brightness such pernicious upstarts dim,
 Say they ; and lovingly advise your grace,
 To cherish virtue and nobility,
 And have old servitors in high esteem,
 And shake off smooth dissembling flatterers :
 This granted, they, their honours, and their lives,
 Are to your highness vowed and consecrate.

Y. Spen. Ah, traitors ! will they still display their pride ?

K. Edw. Away, tarry no answer, but be gone !
 Rebels, will they appoint their sovereign
 His sports, his pleasures, and his company ?
 Yet, ere thou go, see how I do divorce [*Embraces SPENCER.*
 Spencer from me. — Now get thee to thy lords,
 And tell them I will come to chastise them
 For murdering Gaveston ; hie thee, get thee gone !
 Edward with fire and sword follows at thy heels. [*Exit Herald.*
 My lords, perceive you how these rebels swell ?
 Soldiers, good hearts, defend your sovereign's right,
 For now, even now, we march to make them stoop.
 Away ! [*Excunt. Alarums, excursions, a great fight, and a
 retreat sounded, within.*

*Re-enter KING EDWARD, the Elder SPENCER, Young SPENCER, and
 Noblemen of the KING's side.*

K. Edw. Why do we sound retreat ? upon them, lords !
 This day I shall pour vengeance with my sword
 On those proud rebels that are up in arms,
 And do confront and countermand their king.

Y. Spen. I doubt it not, my lord, right will prevail.

E. Spen. 'Tis not amiss, my liege, for either part
 To breathe awhile ; our men, with sweat and dust
 All choked well near, begin to faint for heat ;
 And this retire refresheth horse and man.

Y. Spen. Here come the rebels.

*Enter Young MORTIMER, LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, and
 others.*

Y. Mor. Look, Lancaster, yonder is Edward
 Among his flatterers.

Lan. And there let him be
Till he pay dearly for their company.

War. And shall, or Warwick's sword shall smite in vain.

K. Edw. What, rebels, do you shrink and sound retreat?

Y. Mor. No, Edward, no, thy flatterers faint and fly.

Lan. They'd best betimes forsake thee, and their trains,¹
For they'll betray thee, traitors as they are.

Y. Spen. Traitor on thy face, rebellious Lancaster!

Pem. Away, base upstart, bravest thou nobles thus?

E. Spen. A noble attempt, and honourable deed,
It is not, trow ye, to assemble aid,
And levy arms against your lawful king!

K. Edw. For which ere long their heads shall satisfy,
To appease the wrath of their offended king.

Y. Mor. Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it to the last,
And rather bathe thy sword in subjects' blood,
Than banish that pernicious company?

K. Edw. Ay, traitors all, rather than thus be braved,
Make England's civil towns huge heaps of stones,
And ploughs to go about our palace-gates.

War. A desperate and unnatural resolution!
Alarum! — to the fight!

Saint George for England, and the barons' right.

K. Edw. Saint George for England, and King Edward's
right. [*Alarums. Exeunt the two parties severally.*]

SCENE III.—ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Enter KING EDWARD and his followers, with the Barons and KENT, captives.

K. Edw. Now, lusty lords, now, not by chance of war,
But justice of the quarrel and the cause,
Vailed² is your pride; methinks you hang the heads,
But we'll advance them, traitors; now 'tis time
To be avenged on you for all your braves,
And for the murder of my dearest friend,
To whom right well you knew our soul was knit,
Good Pierce of Gaveston, my sweet favourite.
Ah, rebels! recreants! you made him away.

Kent. Brother, in regard of thee, and of thy land,
Did they remove that flatterer from thy throne.

K. Edw. So, sir, you have spoke; away, avoid our presence!
[*Exit KENT.*]

Accursèd wretches, was't in regard of us,

¹ Stratagems.

² Humbled.

When we had sent our messenger to request
 He might be spared to come to speak with us,
 And Pembroke undertook for his return,
 That thou, proud Warwick, watched the prisoner,
 Poor Pierce, and headed him 'gainst law of arms?
 For which thy head shall overlook the rest,
 As much as thou in rage outwent'st the rest.

War. Tyrant, I scorn thy threats and menaces;
 It is but temporal that thou canst inflict.

Lan. The worst is death, and better die to live
 Than live in infamy under such a king.

K. Edw. Away with them, my lord of Winchester!
 These lusty leaders, Warwick and Lancaster,
 I charge you roundly — off with both their heads!
 Away!

War. Farewell, vain world!

Lan. Sweet Mortimer, farewell.

Y. Mor. England, unkind to thy nobility,
 Groan for this grief, behold how thou art maimed!

K. Edw. Go, take that haughty Mortimer to the Tower,
 There see him safe bestowed; and for the rest,
 Do speedy execution on them all.
 Begone!

Y. Mor. What, Mortimer! can ragged stony walls
 Immure thy virtue that aspires to Heaven?
 No Edward, England's scourge, it may not be;
 Mortimer's hope surmounts his fortune far.

[*The captive Barons are led off.*]

K. Edw. Sound drums and trumpets! March with me, my
 friends,
 Edward this day hath crowned him king anew.

[*Exeunt all except Young SPENCER, LEVUNE, and BALDOCK.*]

Y. Spen. Levune, the trust that we repose in thee,
 Begets the quiet of King Edward's land.
 Therefore begone in haste, and with advice
 Bestow that treasure on the lords of France,
 That, therewith all enchanted, like the guard
 That suffered Jove to pass in showers of gold
 To Danae, all aid may be denied
 To Isabel, the queen, that now in France
 Makes friends, to cross the seas with her young son,
 And step into his father's regiment.¹

Levune. That's it these barons and the subtle queen
 Long levelled at.

Bal. Yea, but, Levune, thou seest
These barons lay their heads on blocks together ;
What they intend, the hangman frustrates clean.

Levune. Have you no doubt, my lords, I'll clap so close
Among the lords of France with England's gold,
That Isabel shall make her plaints in vain,
And France shall be obdurate with her tears.

Spem. Then make for France, amain — Levune, away !
Proclaim King Edward's wars and victories. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I. — IN LONDON, NEAR THE TOWER

KENT. Fair blows the wind for France ; blow gentle gale,
Till Edmund be arrived for England's good !
Nature, yield to my country's cause in this.
A brother ? no, a butcher of thy friends !
Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence ?
But I'll to France, and cheer the wrongèd queen,
And certify what Edward's looseness is.
Unnatural king ! to slaughter noblemen
And cherish flatterers ! Mortimer, I stay
Thy sweet escape : stand gracious, gloomy night,
To his device.

Enter Young MORTIMER, disguised.

Y. Mor. Holla ! who walketh there ?
Is't you, my lord ?

Kent. Mortimer, 'tis I ;
But hath thy potion wrought so happily ?

Y. Mor. It hath, my lord ; the warders all asleep,
I thank them, gave me leave to pass in peace.
But hath your grace got shipping unto France ?

Kent. Fear it not. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — IN PARIS

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA and PRINCE EDWARD.

Q. Isab. Ah, boy ! our friends do fail us all in France :
The lords are cruel, and the king unkind ;
What shall we do ?

P. Edw. Madam, return to England,

And please my father well, and then a fig
 For all my uncle's friendship here in France.
 I warrant you, I'll win his highness quickly ;
 'A loves me better than a thousand Spencers.

Q. Isab. Ah, boy, thou art deceived, at least in this,
 To think that we can yet be tuned together ;
 No, no, we jar too far. Unkind Valois !
 Unhappy Isabel ! when France rejects,
 Whither, oh ! whither dost thou bend thy steps ?

Enter SIR JOHN of HAINAULT.

Sir. J. Madam, what cheer ?

Q. Isab. Ah ! good Sir John of Hainault,
 Never so cheerless, nor so far distrest.

Sir J. I hear, sweet lady, of the king's unkindness ;
 But droop not, madam ; noble minds contemn
 Despair : will your grace with me to Hainault,
 And there stay time's advantage with your son ?
 How say you, my lord, will you go with your friends,
 And shake off all our fortunes equally ?

P. Edw. So pleaseth the queen, my mother, me it likes :
 The King of England, nor the court of France,
 Shall have me from my gracious mother's side,
 Till I be strong enough to break a staff ;
 And then have at the proudest Spencer's head.

Sir J. Well said, my lord.

Q. Isab. O, my sweet heart, how do I moan thy wrongs,
 Yet triumph in the hope of thee, my joy !
 Ah, sweet Sir John ! even to the utmost verge
 Of Europe, or the shore of Tanais,
 We will with thee to Hainault—so we will : —
 The marquis is a noble gentleman ;
 His grace, I dare presume, will welcome me.
 But who are these ?

Enter KENT and Young MORTIMER.

Kent. Madam, long may you live,
 Much happier than your friends in England do !

Q. Isab. Lord Edmund and Lord Mortimer alive !
 Welcome to France ! the news was here, my lord,
 That you were dead, or very near your death.

Y. Mor. Lady, the last was truest of the twain :
 But Mortimer, reserved for better hap,
 Hath shaken off the thraldom of the Tower,
 And lives t' advance your standard, good my lord.

P. Edw. How mean you? and the king, my father, lives!
No, my Lord Mortimer, not I, I trow.

Q. Isab. Not, son! why not? I would it were no worse.
But, gentle lords, friendless we are in France.

Y. Mor. Monsieur le Grand, a noble friend of yours,
Told us, at our arrival, all the news—
How hard the nobles, how unkind the king
Hath showed himself; but, madam, right makes room
Where weapons want; and, though a many friends
Are made away, as Warwick, Lancaster,
And others of our party and faction;
Yet have we friends, assure your grace, in England
Would cast up caps, and clap their hands for joy,
To see us there, appointed¹ for our foes.

Kent. Would all were well, and Edward well reclaimed,
For England's honour, peace, and quietness.

Y. Mor. But by the sword, my lord, 't must be deserved;²
The king will ne'er forsake his flatterers.

Sir. J. My lords of England, sith th' ungente king
Of France refuseth to give aid of arms
To this distressed queen his sister here,
Go you with her to Hainault; doubt ye not,
We will find comfort, money, men and friends
Ere long, to bid the English king a base.³
How say'st, young prince? what think you of the match?

P. Edw. I think King Edward will outrun us all.

Q. Isab. Nay, son, not so; and you must not discourage
Your friends, that are so forward in your aid.

Kent. Sir John of Hainault, pardon us, I pray;
These comforts that you give our woful queen
Bind us in kindness all at your command.

Q. Isab. Yea, gentle brother; and the God of heaven
Prosper your happy motion, good Sir John.

Y. Mor. This noble gentleman, forward in arms,
Was born, I see, to be our anchor-hold.
Sir John of Hainault, be it thy renown,
That England's queen, and nobles in distress,
Have been by thee restored and comforted.

Sir. J. Madam, along, and you my lords, with me,
That England's peers may Hainault's welcome see. [*Exeunt.*]

¹ Ready equipped.

² Earned.

³ Challenge an encounter. The phrase refers to the old game of prison bars or prisoner's base, where a player runs out of bounds and challenges an opponent to pursue him.

SCENE III.—AN APARTMENT IN THE PALACE AT WESTMINSTER

Enter KING EDWARD, ARUNDEL, the Elder and Younger SPENCER, and others.

K. Edw. Thus after many threats of wrathful war,
Triumpheth England's Edward with his friends ;
And triumph, Edward, with his friends uncontrolled !
My lord of Gloucester, do you hear the news ?

Y. Spen. What news, my lord ?

K. Edw. Why, man, they say there is great execution
Done through the realm ; my lord of Arundel,
You have the note, have you not ?

Arun. From the Lieutenant of the Tower, my lord.

K. Edw. I pray let us see it. [*Takes the note.*] What have
we there ?

Read it, Spencer. [*Hands the note to Young SPENCER, who
reads the names.*]

Why, so ; they barked apace a month ago :
Now, on my life, they'll neither bark nor bite.
Now, sirs, the news from France ? Gloucester, I trow
The lords of France love England's gold so well
As Isabella gets no aid from thence.
What now remains ? have you proclaimed, my lord,
Reward for them can bring in Mortimer ?

Y. Spen. My lord, we have ; and if he be in England,
'A will be had ere long, I doubt it not.

K. Edw. If, dost thou say ? Spencer, as true as death,
He is in England's ground ; our portmasters
Are not so careless of their king's command.

Enter a Messenger.

How now, what news with thee ? from whence come these ?

Mess. Letters, my lord, and tidings forth of France ; —
To you, my lord of Gloucester, from Levune.

[*Gives letters to Young SPENCER.*]

K. Edw. Read.

Y. Spen. [*reads*].

"My duty to your honour premised, &c., I have, according to
instructions in that behalf, dealt with the King of France his
lords, and effected, that the queen, all discontented and dis-
comforted, is gone : whither, if you ask, with Sir John of Hai-
nault, brother to the marquis, into Flanders. With them are
gone Lord Edmund, and the Lord Mortimer, having in their
company divers of your nation, and others ; and, as constant
report goeth, they intend to give King Edward battle in Eng-

land, sooner than he can look for them. This is all the news of import.

Your honour's in all service,
LEVUNE."

K. Edw. Ah, villains! hath that Mortimer escaped?
With him is Edmund gone associate?
And will Sir John of Hainault lead the round?
Welcome, a God's name, madam, and your son;
England shall welcome you and all your rout.
Gallop apace, bright Phoebus, through the sky,
And dusky night, in rusty iron car,
Between you both shorten the time, I pray,
That I may see that most desired day,
When we may meet these traitors in the field.
Ah, nothing grieves me, but my little boy
Is thus misled to countenance their ills.
Come, friends, to Bristow,¹ there to make us strong;
And, winds, as equal be to bring them in,
As you injurious were to bear them forth! [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—NEAR HARWICH

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, KENT, YOUNG MORTIMER,
and SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.

Q. Isab. Now, lords, our loving friends and countrymen,
Welcome to England all, with prosperous winds!
Our kindest friends in Belgia have we left,
To cope with friends at home; a heavy case
When force to force is knit, and sword and glaive
In civil broils make kin and countrymen
Slaughter themselves in others, and their sides
With their own weapons gore! But what's the help?
Misgoverned kings are cause of all this wreck;
And, Edward, thou art one among them all,
Whose looseness hath betrayed thy land to spoil,
Who made the channel overflow with blood
Of thine own people; patron shouldst thou be,
But thou——

Y. Mor. Nay, madam, if you be a warrior,
You must not grow so passionate in speeches.
Lords,
Sith that we are by sufferance of Heaven
Arrived, and armed in this prince's right,
Here for our country's cause swear we to him
All homage, fealty, and forwardness;

¹ Bristol.

And for the open wrongs and injuries
Edward hath done to us, his queen and land,
We come in arms to wreak it with the sword ;
That England's queen in peace may repossess
Her dignities and honours : and withal
We may remove these flatterers from the king,
That havoc England's wealth and treasury.

Sir J. Sound trumpets, my lord, and forward let us march.
Edward will think we come to flatter him.

Kent. I would he never had been flattered more !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—NEAR BRISTOL

Enter KING EDWARD, BALDOCK, *and* Young SPENCER.

Y. Spen. Fly, fly, my lord ! the queen is over-strong ;
Her friends do multiply, and yours do fail.
Shape we our course to Ireland, there to breathe.

K. Edw. What ! was I born to fly and run away,
And leave the Mortimers conquerors behind ?
Give me my horse, and let's reinforce our troops :
And in this bed of honour die with fame.

Bald. O no, my lord, this princely resolution
Fits not the time ; away ! we are pursued.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter KENT, *with sword and target.*

Kent. This way he fled, but I am come too late.
Edward, alas ! my heart relents for thee.
Proud traitor, Mortimer, why dost thou chase
Thy lawful king, thy sovereign, with thy sword ?
Vile wretch ! and why hast thou, of all unkind,
Borne arms against thy brother and thy king ?
Rain showers of vengeance on my cursed head,
Thou God, to whom in justice it belongs
To punish this unnatural revolt !
Edward, this Mortimer aims at thy life !
O fly him, then ! But, Edmund, calm this rage,
Dissemble, or thou diest ; for Mortimer
And Isabel do kiss, while they conspire :
And yet she bears a face of love forsooth.
Fie on that love that hatcheth death and hate !
Edmund, away ! Bristow to Longshanks' blood
Is false ; be not found single for suspect :
Proud Mortimer pries near unto thy walks.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, YOUNG MORTIMER, and SIR JOHN of HAINAULT.

Q. Isab. Successful battle gives the God of kings
To them that fight in right and fear his wrath.
Since then successfully we have prevailed,
Thankèd be Heaven's great architect, and you.
Ere farther we proceed, my noble lords,
We here create our well-belovèd son,
Of love and care unto his royal person
Lord Warden of the realm, and sith the fates
Have made his father so unfortunate,
Deal you, my lords, in this, my loving lords,
As to your wisdoms fittest seems in all.

Kent. Madam, without offence, if I may ask,
How will you deal with Edward in his fall?

P. Edw. Tell me, good uncle, what Edward do you mean?

Kent. Nephew, your father: I dare not call him king.

Y. Mor. My lord of Kent, what needs these questions?
'Tis not in her controlment, nor in ours,
But as the realm and parliament shall please,
So shall your brother be disposèd of. —
I like not this relenting mood in Edmund.
Madam, 'tis good to look to him betimes.

[*Aside to the QUEEN.*

Q. Isab. My lord, the Mayor of Bristow knows our mind.

Y. Mor. Yea, madam, and they 'scape not easily
That fled the field.

Q. Isab. Baldock is with the king.

A goodly chancellor, is he not, my lord?

Sir J. So are the Spencers, the father and the son.

Kent. This Edward is the ruin of the realm.

Enter RICE AP HOWELL, with the Elder SPENCER prisoner, and Attendants.

Rice. God save Queen Isabel, and her princely son!
Madam, the mayor and citizens of Bristow,
In sign of love and duty to this presence,
Present by me this traitor to the state,
Spencer, the father to that wanton Spencer,
That, like the lawless Catiline of Rome,
Revelled in England's wealth and treasury.

Q. Isab. We thank you all.

Y. Mor. Your loving care in this
Deserveth princely favours and rewards.

But where's the king and the other Spencer fled?

Rice. Spencer the son, created Earl of Gloucester,
Is with that smooth-tongued scholar Baldock gone,
And shipped but late for Ireland with the king.

Y. Mor. Some whirlwind fetch him back or sink them all! —

[*Aside.*

They shall be started thence, I doubt it not.

P. Edw. Shall I not see the king my father yet?

Kent. Unhappy Edward, chased from England's bounds.

[*Aside.*

Sir J. Madam, what resteth, why stand you in a muse?

Q. Isab. I rue my lord's ill-fortune; but alas!

Care of my country called me to this war.

Y. Mor. Madam, have done with care and sad complaint;
Your king hath wronged your country and himself,
And we must seek to right it as we may.

Meanwhile, have hence this rebel to the block.

E. Spen. Rebel is he that fights against the prince;
So fought not they that fought in Edward's right.

Y. Mor. Take him away, he prates;

[*Exeunt Attendants with the Elder SPENCER.*

You, Rice ap Howell,

Shall do good service to her majesty,
Being of countenance in your country here,
To follow these rebellious runagates.

We in meanwhile, madam, must take advice,
How Baldock, Spencer, and their complices,
May in their fall be followed to their end.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. — IN NEATH ABBEY, SOUTH WALES

*Enter the Abbot, Monks, KING EDWARD, YOUNG SPENCER, and
BALDOCK (the three latter disguised).*

Abbot. Have you no doubt, my lord; have you no fear;
As silent and as careful we will be,
To keep your royal person safe with us,
Free from suspect, and fell invasion
Of such as have your majesty in chase,
Yourself, and those your chosen company,
As danger of this stormy time requires.

K. Edw. Father, thy face should harbour no deceit.
O! hadst thou ever been a king, thy heart,
Pierced deeply with a sense of my distress,
Could not but take compassion of my state.
Stately and proud, in riches and in train,

Whilom I was, powerful, and full of pomp :
But what is he whom rule and empery
Have not in life or death made miserable?
Come, Spencer ; come Baldock, come, sit down by me ;
Make trial now of that philosophy,
That in our famous nurseries of arts
Thou suck'dst from Plato and from Aristotle.
Father, this life contemplative is Heaven.
O that I might this life in quiet lead !
But we, alas ! are chased ; and you, my friends,
Your lives and my dishonour they pursue.
Yet, gentle monks, for treasure, gold nor fee,
Do you betray us and our company.

Monk. Your grace may sit secure, if none but we
Do wot of your abode.

Y. Spen. Not one alive, but shrewdly I suspect
A gloomy fellow in a mead below.
'A gave a long look after us, my lord ;
And all the land I know is up in arms,
Arms that pursue our lives with deadly hate.

Bald. We were embarked for Ireland, wretched we !
With awkward winds and sore tempests driven
To fall on shore, and here to pine in fear
Of Mortimer and his confederates.

K. Edw. Mortimer ! who talks of Mortimer?
Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer,
That bloody man? Good father, on thy lap
Lay I this head, laden with mickle care.
O might I never open these eyes again !
Never again lift up this drooping head !
O never more lift up this dying heart !

Y. Spen. Look up, my lord. — Baldock, this drowsiness
Betides no good ; here even we are betrayed.

*Enter, with Welsh hooks, RICE AP HOWELL, a Mower, and
LEICESTER.*

Mow. Upon my life, these be the men ye seek.

Rice. Fellow, enough. — My lord, I pray be short,
A fair commission warrants what we do.

Leices. The queen's commission, urged by Mortimer ;
What can not gallant Mortimer with the queen ?
Alas ! see where he sits, and hopes unseen
To escape their hands that seek to reave his life.
Too true it is, " Quem dies vidit veniens superbum

Hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem." ¹

But, Leicester, leave to grow so passionate.

Spencer and Baldock, by no other names,

I do arrest you of high treason here.

Stand not on titles, but obey the arrest ;

'Tis in the name of Isabel the queen.

My lord, why droop you thus ?

K. Edw. O day the last of all my bliss on earth !

Centre of all misfortune ! O my stars,

Why do you lour unkindly on a king ?

Comes Leicester, then, in Isabella's name

To take my life, my company from me ?

Here, man, rip up this panting breast of mine,

And take my heart in rescue of my friends !

Rice. Away with them !

Y. Spen. It may become thee yet

To let us take our farewell of his grace.

Abbot. My heart with pity earns ² to see this sight,

A king to bear these words and proud commands.

[*Aside.*

K. Edw. Spencer, ah, sweet Spencer, thus then must we part ?

Y. Spen. We must, my lord, so will the angry Heavens.

K. Edw. Nay, so will hell and cruel Mortimer ;
The gentle Heavens have not to do in this.

Bald. My lord, it is in vain to grieve or storm.

Here humbly of your grace we take our leaves ;

Our lots are cast ; I fear me, so is thine.

K. Edw. In Heaven we may, in earth ne'er shall we meet :
And, Leicester, say, what shall become of us ?

Leices. Your majesty must go to Killingworth.³

K. Edw. Must ! it is somewhat hard, when kings must go.

Leices. Here is a litter ready for your grace,
That waits your pleasure, and the day grows old.

Rice. As good be gone, as stay and be benighted.

K. Edw. A litter hast thou ? lay me in a hearse,
And to the gates of hell convey me hence ;
Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell,
And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore,
For friends hath Edward none but these,
And these must die under a tyrant's sword.

Rice. My lord, be going ; care not for these,
For we shall see them shorter by the heads.

K. Edw. Well, that shall be, shall be : part we must !

¹ He whom the day sees advancing proudly the same day sees flying defeated.
Seneca, Thyestes, 613.

² Years.

³ Kenilworth.

Sweet Spencer, gentle Baldock, part we must !
Hence feignèd weeds ! unfeignèd are my woes ;

[*Throws off his disguise.*

Father, farewell ! Leicester, thou stay'st for me,
And go I must. Life, farewell, with my friends.

[*Exeunt KING EDWARD and LEICESTER.*

Y. Spen. O ! is he gone ? is noble Edward gone ?
Parted from hence ? never to see us more ?
Rend, sphere of Heaven ! and, fire, forsake thy orb !
Earth, melt to air ! gone is my sovereign,
Gone, gone, alas ! never to make return.

Bald. Spencer, I see our souls are fleeting hence ;
We are deprived the sunshine of our life :
Make for a new life, man ; throw up thy eyes,
And heart and hands to Heaven's immortal throne ;
Pay nature's debt with cheerful countenance ;
Reduce we all our lessons unto this,
To die, sweet Spencer, therefore live we all ;
Spencer, all live to die, and rise to fall.

Rice. Come, come, keep these preachments till you come to
the place appointed. You, and such as you are, have made
wise work in England ; will your lordships away ?

Mow. Your lordship, I trust, will remember me ?

Rice. Remember thee, fellow ! what else ? Follow me to the
town.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I. — IN KENILWORTH CASTLE

*Enter KING EDWARD, LEICESTER, the BISHOP of WINCHESTER, and
TRUSSEL.*

L EICES. Be patient, good my lord, cease to lament,
Imagine Killingworth Castle were your court,
And that you lay for pleasure here a space,
Not of compulsion or necessity.

K. Edw. Leicester, if gentle words might comfort me,
Thy speeches long ago had eased my sorrows ;
For kind and loving hast thou always been.
'The griefs of private men are soon allayed,
But not of kings. The forest deer, being struck,
Runs to an herb¹ that closeth up the wounds ;

¹ Dittany, a species of *Origanum*. Elizabethan poets often allude to the
supposed virtues of this herb.

But, when the imperial lion's flesh is gored,
 He rends and tears it with his wrathful paw,
 And highly scorning that the lowly earth
 Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air.
 And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind
 The ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb,
 And that unnatural queen, false Isabel,
 That thus hath pent and mewed me in a prison ;
 For such outrageous passions cloy my soul,
 As with the wings of rancour and disdain,
 Full often am I soaring up to Heaven,
 To plain me to the gods against them both.
 But when I call to mind I am a king,
 Methinks I should revenge me of my wrongs,
 That Mortimer and Isabel have done.
 But what are kings, when regiment ¹ is gone,
 But perfect shadows in a sunshine day ?
 My nobles rule, I bear the name of king ;
 I wear the crown, but am controlled by them,
 By Mortimer, and my unconstant queen,
 Who spots my nuptial bed with infamy ;
 Whilst I am lodged within this cave of care,
 Where sorrow at my elbow still attends,
 To company my heart with sad laments,
 That bleeds within me for this strange exchange.
 But tell me, must I now resign my crown,
 To make usurping Mortimer a king ?

B. of Win. Your grace mistakes ; it is for England's good,
 And princely Edward's right we crave the crown.

K. Edw. No, 'tis for Mortimer, not Edward's head ;
 For he's a lamb, encompassed by wolves,
 Which in a moment will abridge his life.
 But if proud Mortimer do wear this crown,
 Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire !
 Or like a snaky wreath of Tisiphon,
 Engirt the temples of his hateful head ;
 So shall not England's vine be perished,
 But Edward's name survives, though Edward dies.

Leices. My lord, why waste you thus the time away ?
 They stay your answer ; will you yield your crown ?

K. Edw. Ah, Leicester, weigh how hardly I can brook
 To lose my crown and kingdom without cause ;
 To give ambitious Mortimer my right,
 That like a mountain overwhelms my bliss,

¹ Rule.

In which extreme my mind here murdered is.
But what the heavens appoint, I must obey !
Here, take my crown ; the life of Edward too ;

[*Taking off the crown.*]

Two kings in England can not reign at once.
But stay awhile, let me be king till night,
That I may gaze upon this glittering crown ;
So shall my eyes receive their last content,
My head, the latest honour due to it,
And jointly both yield up their wishèd right.
Continue ever thou celestial sun ;
Let never silent night possess this clime :
Stand still you watches of the element ;
All times and seasons, rest you at a stay,
That Edward may be still fair England's king !
But day's bright beam doth vanish fast away,
And needs I must resign my wishèd crown.
Inhuman creatures ! nursed with tiger's milk !
Why gape you for your sovereign's overthrow !
My diadem I mean, and guiltless life.
See, monsters, see, I'll wear my own crown again !

[*He puts on the crown.*]

What, fear you not the fury of your king ?
But, hapless Edward, thou art fondly¹ led ;
They pass not² for thy frowns as late they did,
But seek to make a new-elected king ;
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyrèd with endless torments,
And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head :
And therefore let me wear it yet awhile.

Trus. My lord, the parliament must have present news,
And therefore say, will you resign or no? [*The KING rageth.*]

K. Edw. I'll not resign, but whilst I live be king.
Traitors, be gone ! and join you with Mortimer !
Elect, conspire, install, do what you will : —
Their blood and yours shall seal these treacheries !

B. of Win. This answer we'll return, and so farewell.

[*Going with TRUSSEL.*]

Leices. Call them again, my lord, and speak them fair ;
For if they go, the prince shall lose his right.

K. Edw. Call thou them back, I have no power to speak.

Leices. My lord, the king is willing to resign.

B. of Win. If he be not, let him choose.

¹ Foolishly.

² Care not.

K. Edw. O would I might ! but heavens and earth conspire
 To make me miserable ! Here receive my crown ;
 Receive it ? no, these innocent hands of mine
 Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime.
 He of you all that most desires my blood,
 And will be called the murderer of a king,
 Take it. What, are you moved ? pity you me ?
 Then send for unrelenting Mortimer,
 And Isabel, whose eyes, being turned to steel,
 Will sooner sparkle fire than shed a tear.
 Yet stay, for rather than I'll look on them,
 Here, here !

[*Gives the crown.*]

Now, sweet God of Heaven,
 Make me despise this transitory pomp,
 And sit for aye enthronized in Heaven !
 Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
 Or if I live, let me forget myself.

B. of Win. My lord —

K. Edw. Call me not lord ; away — out of my sight :
 Ah, pardon me : grief makes me lunatic !
 Let not that Mortimer protect my son ;
 More safety there is in a tiger's jaws,
 Than his embracements. Bear this to the queen,
 Wet with my tears, and dried again with sighs ;

[*Gives a handkerchief.*]

If with the sight thereof she be not moved,
 Return it back and dip it in my blood.
 Commend me to my son, and bid him rule
 Better than I. Yet how have I transgressed,
 Unless it be with too much clemency ?

Trus. And thus most humbly do we take our leave.

K. Edw. Farewell ;

[*Exeunt the BISHOP of WINCHESTER and TRUSSEL.*]

I know the next news that they bring
 Will be my death ; and welcome shall it be ;
 To wretched men, death is felicity.

Enter BERKELEY, who gives a paper to LEICESTER.

Leices. Another post ! what news brings he

K. Edw. Such news as I expect — come, Berkeley, come,
 Tell thy message to my naked breast.

Berk. My lord, think not a thought so villainous
 Can harbour in a man of noble birth.
 To do your highness service and devoir,
 And save you from your foes, Berkeley would die.

Leices. My lord, the council of the queen commands
That I resign my charge.

K. Edw. And who must keep me now? Must you, my lord?

Berk. Ay, my most gracious lord — so 'tis decreed.

K. Edw. [*taking the paper*]. By Mortimer, whose name is
written here!

Well may I rend his name that rends my heart! [*Tears it.*]

This poor revenge has something eased my mind.

So may his limbs be torn, as is this paper!

Hear me, immortal Jove, and grant it too!

Berk. Your grace must hence with me to Berkeley straight.

K. Edw. Whither you will; all places are alike,
And every earth is fit for burial.

Leices. Favour him, my lord, as much as lieth in you.

Berk. Even so betide my soul as I use him.

K. Edw. Mine enemy hath pitied my estate,
And that's the cause that I am now removed.

Berk. And thinks your grace that Berkeley will be cruel?

K. Edw. I know not; but of this am I assured,
That death ends all, and I can die but once.
Leicester, farewell!

Leices. Not yet, my lord; I'll bear you on your way.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—AN APARTMENT IN THE ROYAL PALACE

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA and Young MORTIMER.

Y. Mor. Fair Isabel, now have we our desire;
The proud corrupters of the light-brained king
Have done their homage to the lofty gallows,
And he himself lies in captivity.

Be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm.

In any case take heed of childish fear,

For now we hold an old wolf by the ears,

That, if he slip, will seize upon us both,

And gripe the sorer, being griped himself.

Think therefore, madam, that imports us much

To erect your son with all the speed we may,

And that I be protector over him;

For our behoof will bear the greater sway

Whenas a king's name shall be under writ.

Q. Isab. Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel,
Be thou persuaded that I love thee well,
And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,

Conclude against his father what thou wilt,
And I myself will willingly subscribe.

Y. Mor. First would I hear news he were deposed,
And then let me alone to handle him.

Enter Messenger.

Letters ! from whence ?

Mess. From Killingworth, my lord.

Q. Isab. How fares my lord the king ?

Mess. In health, madam, but full of pensiveness.

Q. Isab. Alas, poor soul, would I could ease his grief !

Enter the BISHOP of WINCHESTER with the crown.

Thanks, gentle Winchester. [*To the Messenger.*] Sirrah, be gone. [*Exit Messenger.*]

B. of Win. The king hath willingly resigned his crown.

Q. Isab. O happy news ! send for the prince, my son.

B. of Win. Further, or this letter was sealed, Lord Berkeley came,

So that he now is gone from Killingworth ;
And we have heard that Edmund laid a plot
To set his brother free ; no more but so.
The lord of Berkeley is as pitiful
As Leicester that had charge of him before.

Q. Isab. Then let some other be his guardian.

Y. Mor. Let me alone, here is the privy seal.

[*Exit the BISHOP of WINCHESTER.*]

Who's there ? — Call hither Gurney and Matrevis.

[*To Attendants within.*]

To dash the heavy-headed Edmund's drift,
Berkeley shall be discharged, the king removed,
And none but we shall know where he lieth.

Q. Isab. But, Mortimer, as long as he survives,
What safety rests for us, or for my son ?

Y. Mor. Speak, shall he presently be despatched and die ?

Q. Isab. I would he were, so 'twere not by my means.

Enter MATREVIS ' and GURNEY.

Y. Mor. Enough. —

Matrevis, write a letter presently
Unto the lord of Berkeley from ourself
That he resign the king to thee and Gurney ;
And when 'tis done, we will subscribe our name.

Mat. It shall be done, my lord.

[*Writes.*]

Gur. My lord.

Y. Mor. As thou intend'st to rise by Mortimer,
Who now makes Fortune's wheel turn as he please,
Seek all the means thou canst to make him droop,
And neither give him kind word nor good look.

Gur. I warrant you my lord.

Y. Mor. And this above the rest : because we hear
That Edmund casts ¹ to work his liberty,
Remove him still from place to place by night,
Till at the last he come to Killingworth,
And then from thence to Berkeley back again ;
And by the way, to make him fret the more,
Speak curstly to him ; and in any case
Let no man comfort him if he chance to weep,
But amplify his grief with bitter words.

Mat. Fear not, my lord, we'll do as you command.

Y. Mor. So now away : post thitherwards amain.

Q. Isab. Whither goes this letter ? to my lord the king ?
Commend me humbly to his majesty,
And tell him that I labour all in vain
To ease his grief, and work his liberty ;
And bear him this as witness of my love.

[*Gives a ring.*

Mat. I will, madam.

[*Exit with GURNEY.*

Y. Mor. Finely dissembled. Do so still, sweet queen.
Here comes the young prince with the Earl of Kent.

Q. Isab. Something he whispers in his childish ears.

Y. Mor. If he have such access unto the prince,
Our plots and stratagems will soon be dashed.

Q. Isab. Use Edmund friendly as if all were well.

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, and KENT talking with him.

Y. Mor. How fares my honourable lord of Kent ?

Kent. In health, sweet Mortimer : how fares your grace ?

Q. Isab. Well, if my lord your brother were enlarged.

Kent. I hear of late he hath deposed himself.

Q. Isab. The more my grief.

Y. Mor. And mine.

Kent. Ah, they do dissemble !

[*Aside.*

Q. Isab. Sweet son, come hither, I must talk with thee.

Y. Mor. You being his uncle, and the next of blood,
Do look to be protector o'er the prince.

Kent. Not I, my lord ; who should protect the son,
But she that gave him life ? I mean the queen.

P. Edw. Mother, persuade me not to wear the crown :

Let him be king — I am too young to reign.

Q. Isab. But be content, seeing 'tis his highness' pleasure.

P. Edw. Let me but see him first, and then I will.

Kent. Ay, do, sweet nephew.

Q. Isab. Brother, you know it is impossible.

P. Edw. Why, is he dead?

Q. Isab. No, God forbid.

Kent. I would those words proceeded from your heart.

Y. Mor. Inconstant Edmund, dost thou favour him,
That wast a cause of his imprisonment?

Kent. The more cause have I now to make amends.

Y. Mor. [*Aside to Q. ISAB.*] I tell thee, 'tis not meet that
one so false

Should come about the person of a prince.

My lord, he hath betrayed the king his brother,

And therefore trust him not.

P. Edw. But he repents, and sorrows for it now.

Q. Isab. Come, son, and go with this gentle lord and me.

P. Edw. With you I will, but not with Mortimer.

Y. Mor. Why, youngling, 'sdain'st thou so of Mortimer?

Then I will carry thee by force away.

P. Edw. Help, uncle Kent! Mortimer will wrong me.

Q. Isab. Brother Edmund, strive not; we are his friends;
Isabel is nearer than the Earl of Kent.

Kent. Sister, Edward is my charge, redeem him.

Q. Isab. Edward is my son, and I will keep him.

Kent. Mortimer shall know that he hath wronged me! —
Hence will I haste to Killingworth Castle,
And rescue aged Edward from his foes,
To be revenged on Mortimer and thee.

[*Aside.*
'*Excunt on one side* QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD,
and YOUNG MORTIMER; *on the other*, KENT.

SCENE III.—IN KENILWORTH CASTLE

Enter MATREVIS and GURNEY and Soldiers, with KING EDWARD.

Mat. My lord, be not pensive, we are your friends;
Men are ordained to live in misery,
Therefore come, — dalliance dangereth our lives.

K. Edw. Friends, whither must unhappy Edward go?
Will hateful Mortimer appoint no rest?
Must I be vexed like the nightly bird,
Whose sight is loathsome to all winged fowls?
When will the fury of his mind assuage?
When will his heart be satisfied with blood?

If mine will serve, unbowel straight this breast,
And give my heart to Isabel and him ;
It is the chiefest mark they level at.

Gur. Not so, my liege, the queen hath given this charge
To keep your grace in safety ;
Your passions make your dolours to increase.

K. Edw. This usage makes my misery to increase.
But can my air of life continue long
When all my senses are annoyed with stench ?
Within a dungeon England's king is kept,
Where I am starved for want of sustenance.
My daily diet is heart-breaking sobs,
That almost rent the closet of my heart ;
Thus lives old ¹ Edward not relieved by any,
And so must die, though pitied by many.
O, water, gentle friends, to cool my thirst,
And clear my body from foul excrements !

Mat. Here's channel ² water, as your charge is given ;
Sit down, for we'll be barbers to your grace.

K. Edw. Traitors, away ! what, will you murder me,
Or choke your sovereign with puddle water ?

Gur. No ; but wash your face, and shave away your beard,
Lest you be known and so be rescued.

Mat. Why strive you thus ? your labour is in vain !

K. Edw. The wren may strive against the lion's strength,
But all in vain : so vainly do I strive
To seek for mercy at a tyrant's hand.

[*They wash him with puddle water and shave off his beard.*
Immortal powers ! that knows the painful cares
That wait upon my poor distressed soul,
O level all your looks upon these daring men,
That wrongs their liege and sovereign, England's king !
O Gaveston, 'tis for thee that I am wronged,
For me, both thou and both the Spencers died !
And for your sakes a thousand wrongs I'll take.
The Spencers' ghosts, wherever they remain,
Wish well to mine ; then tush, for them I'll die.

Mat. 'Twixt theirs and yours shall be no enmity.
Come, come away ; now put the torches out,
We'll enter in by darkness to Killingworth.

Enter KENT.

Gur. How now who comes there ?

¹ Stow often speaks of Edward II. as the "old king," although he was only forty-three at the time of his murder.

² Kennel, gutter.

Mat. Guard the king sure : It is the Earl of Kent.

K. Edw. O gentle brother, help to rescue me !

Mat. Keep them asunder : thrust in the king.

Kent. Soldiers, let me but talk to him one word.

Gur. Lay hands upon the earl for his assault.

Kent. Lay down your weapons, traitors ! yield the king !

Mat. Edmund, yield thou thyself, or thou shalt die.

Kent. Base villains, wherefore do you gripe me thus ?

Gur. Bind him and so convey him to the court.

Kent. Where is the court but here ? here is the king ;
And I will visit him ; why stay you me ?

Mat. The court is where Lord Mortimer remains ;
Thither shall your honour go ; and so farewell.

[*Exeunt MATREVIS and GURNEY, with KING EDWARD.*]

Kent. O miserable is that commonweal,
Where lords keep courts, and kings are locked in prison !

Sol. Wherefore stay we ? on, sirs, to the court !

Kent. Ay, lead me whither you will, even to my death,
Seeing that my brother can not be released. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—AN APARTMENT IN THE ROYAL PALACE

Enter Young MORTIMER.

Y. Mor. The king must die, or Mortimer goes down ;
The commons now begin to pity him :

Yet he that is the cause of Edward's death,

Is sure to pay for it when his son's of age ;

And therefore will I do it cunningly.

This letter, written by a friend of ours,
Contains his death, yet bids them save his life. [*Reads.*]

"Edwardum occidere nolite timere, bonum est

Fear not to kill the king, 'tis good he die."

But read it thus, and that's another sense :

"Edwardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est

Kill not the king, 'tis good to fear the worst."

Unpointed as it is, thus shall it go,

That, being dead, if it chance to be found,

Matrevis and the rest may bear the blame,

And we be quit that caused it to be done.

Within this room is locked the messenger

That shall convey it, and perform the rest :

And by a secret token that he bears,

Shall he be murdered when the deed is done.—

Lightborn, come forth !

Enter LIGHTBORN.

Art thou so resolute as thou wast?

Light. What else, my lord? and far more resolute.

Y. Mor. And hast thou cast¹ how to accomplish it?

Light. Ay, ay, and none shall know which way he died.

Y. Mor. But at his looks, Lightborn, thou wilt relent.

Light. Relent! ha, ha! I use much to relent.

Y. Mor. Well, do it bravely, and be secret.

Light. You shall not need to give instructions;

'Tis not the first time I have killed a man.

I learned in Naples how to poison flowers;

To strangle with a lawn thrust down the throat;

To pierce the windpipe with a needle's point;

Or whilst one is asleep, to take a quill

And blow a little powder in his ears:

Or open his mouth and pour quicksilver down.

And yet I have a braver way than these.

Y. Mor. What's that?

Light. Nay, you shall pardon me; none shall know my tricks.

Y. Mor. I care not how it is, so it be not spied.

Deliver this to Gurney and Matrevis. [*Gives letter.*]

At every ten mile end thou hast a horse.

Take this; [*Gives money*] away! and never see me more.

Light. No!

Y. Mor. No;

Unless thou bring me news of Edward's death.

Light. That will I quickly do. Farewell, my lord. [*Exit.*]

Y. Mor. The prince I rule, the queen do I command,

And with a lowly congé to the ground,

The proudest lords salute me as I pass;

I seal, I cancel, I do what I will.

Feared am I more than loved; — let me be feared,

And when I frown, make all the court look pale.

I view the prince with Aristarchus' eyes,

Whose looks were as a breeching to a boy.

They thrust upon me the protectorship,

And sue to me for that that I desire.

While at the council-table, grave enough,

And not unlike a bashful puritan,

First I complain of imbecility,

Saying it is "onus quam gravissimum";

Till being interrupted by my friends,

¹ Contrived.

*Suscepi that provinciam as they term it ;
 And to conclude, I am Protector now.
 Now is all sure : the queen and Mortimer
 Shall rule the realm, the king ; and none rules us.
 Mine enemies will I plague, my friends advance ;
 And what I list command who dare control ?
 "Major sum quam cui possit fortuna nocere."¹
 And that this be the coronation day,
 It pleaseth me, and Isabel the queen. [Trumpets within.
 The trumpets sound, I must go take my place.*

The scene changes to Westminster

*Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, QUEEN ISABELLA, the ARCHBISHOP
 of CANTERBURY, Champion and Nobles.*

A. of Cant. Long live King Edward, by the grace of God,
 King of England and Lord of Ireland !

Cham. If any Christian, Heathen, Turk, or Jew,
 Dare but affirm that Edward's not true king,
 And will avouch his saying with the sword,
 I am the champion that will combat him.

Y. Mor. None comes, sound trumpets. [Trumpets sound.

K. Edw. Third. Champion, here's to thee. [Gives a purse.

Q. Isab. Lord Mortimer, now take him to your charge.

Enter Soldiers, with KENT prisoner.

Y. Mor. What traitor have we there with blades and bills ?

Sol. Edmund, the Earl of Kent.

K. Edw. Third. What hath he done ?

Sol. 'A would have taken the king away perforce,
 As we were bringing him to Killingworth.

Y. Mor. Did you attempt his rescue, Edmund ? speak.

Kent. Mortimer, I did ; he is our king,
 And thou compell'st this prince to wear the crown.

Y. Mor. Strike off his head ! he shall have martial law.

Kent. Strike off my head ! base traitor, I defy thee !

K. Edw. Third. My lord, he is my uncle, and shall live.

Y. Mor. My lord, he is your enemy, and shall die.

Kent. Stay, villains !

K. Edw. Third. Sweet mother, if I can not pardon him,
 Entreat my Lord Protector for his life.

Q. Isab. Son, be content ; I dare not speak a word.

K. Edw. Third. Nor I, and yet methinks I should command ;

¹ I am higher than Fortune can reach. Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 195.

But, seeing I cannot, I'll entreat for him —
My lord, if you will let my uncle live,
I will requite it when I come to age.

Y. Mor. 'Tis for your highness' good, and for the realm's. —
How often shall I bid you bear him hence?

Kent. Art thou king? must I die at thy command?

Y. Mor. At our command. — Once more away with him.

Kent. Let me but stay and speak; I will not go.

Either my brother or his son is king,
And none of both them thirst for Edmund's blood:
And therefore, soldiers, whither will you hale me?

[Soldiers hale KENT away, to be beheaded.]

K. Edw. Third. What safety may I look for at his hands,
If that my uncle shall be murdered thus?

Q. Isab. Fear not, sweet boy, I'll guard thee from thy foes;
Had Edmund lived, he would have sought thy death.

Come, son, we'll ride a-hunting in the park.

K. Edw. Third. And shall my uncle Edmund ride with us?

Q. Isab. He is a traitor: think not on him: come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—IN BERKELEY CASTLE

Enter MATREVIS and GURNEY.

Mat. Gurney, I wonder the king dies not,
Being in a vault up to the knees in water,
To which the channels of the castle run,
From whence a damp continually ariseth,
That were enough to poison any man,
Much more a king brought up so tenderly.

Gur. And so do I, Matrevis: yesternight
I opened but the door to throw him meat,
And I was almost stifled with the savour.

Mat. He hath a body able to endure
More than we can inflict: and therefore now
Let us assail his mind another while.

Gur. Send for him out thence, and I will anger him.

Mat. But stay, who's this?

Enter LIGHTBORN.

Light. My Lord Protector greets you. [Gives letter.]

Gur. What's here? I know not how to construe it.

Mat. Gurney, it was left unpouinted for the nonce;
"Edwardum occidere nolite timere,"
That's his meaning.

Light. Know ye this token? I must have the king.

[*Gives token.*]

Mat. Ay, stay awhile, thou shalt have answer straight.

This villain's sent to make away the king.

Gur. I thought as much.

[*Aside.*
Aside.]

Mat. And when the murder's done,
See how he must be handled for his labour.

Pereat iste! Let him have the king.

[*Aside.*]

What else? here is the key, this is the lock,
Do as you are commanded by my lord.

Light. I know what I must do. Get you away.
Yet be not far off, I shall need your help;
See that in the next room I have a fire,
And get me a spit, and let it be red-hot.

Mat. Very well.

Gur. Need anything besides?

Light. What else? A table and a feather-bed.

Gur. That's all?

Light. Ay, ay; so, when I call you, bring it in.

Mat. Fear not thou that.

Gur. Here's a light, to go into the dungeon.

[*Gives a light, and then exit with MATREVIS.*]

*The scene now discloses the interior of the dungeon in which KING
EDWARD is confined*

Light. So now

Must I about this this gear¹; ne'er was there any
So finely handled as this king shall be.

Foh, here's a place indeed, with all my heart!

K. Edw. Who's there? what light is that? wherefore com'st
thou?

Light. To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.

K. Edw. Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks.
Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.

Light. To murder you, my most gracious lord!
Far is it from my heart to do you harm.

The queen sent me to see how you were used,
For she relents at this your misery:

And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,
To see a king in this most piteous state?

K. Edw. Weep'st thou already? list awhile to me.
And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,
Or as Matrevis', hewn from the Caucasus,
Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.

¹ Business.

This dungeon where they keep me is the sink
Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.

Light. O villains !

K. Edw. And there in mire and puddle have I stood
This ten days' space ; and, lest that I should sleep,
One plays continually upon a drum.
They give me bread and water, being a king ;
So that, for want of sleep, and sustenance,
My mind's distempered, and my body's numbed,
And whether I have limbs or no I know not.
O, would my blood dropped out from every vein,
As doth this water from my tattered robes.
Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont.

Light. O speak no more, my lord ! this breaks my heart.
Lie on this bed,¹ and rest yourself awhile.

K. Edw. These looks of thine can harbour nought but
death :

I see my tragedy written in thy brows.
Yet stay ; awhile forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,
That even then when I shall lose my life,
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.

Light. What means your highness to mistrust me thus ?

K. Edw. What mean'st thou to dissemble with me thus ?

Light. These hands were never stained with innocent blood,
Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.

K. Edw. Forgive my thought² for having such a thought.
One jewel have I left ; receive thou this. [*Giving jewel.*]

Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee.
O, if thou harbourest murder in thy heart,
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul.
Know that I am a king : O, at that name
I feel a hell of grief ! where is my crown ?
Gone, gone ! and do I still remain alive ?

Light. You're overwatched, my lord ; lie down and rest.

K. Edw. But that grief keeps me waking, I should sleep ;
For not these ten days have these eyelids closed.
Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear
Open again. O wherefore sitt'st thou here ?

Light. If you mistrust me, I'll be gone, my lord.

¹ The feather-bed provided by Gurney and Matrevis.

² Mr. Fleay proposes to read "fault."

K. Edw. No, no, for if thou mean'st to murder me,
Thou wilt return again, and therefore stay. [*Sleeps.*

Light. He sleeps.

K. Edw. [*waking*]. O let me not die yet! O stay a while!

Light. How now, my lord?

K. Edw. Something still buzzeth in mine ears,
And tells me if I sleep I never wake;
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus.
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come?

Light. To rid thee of thy life. — Matrevis, come!

Enter MATREVIS and GURNEY.

K. Edw. I am too weak and feeble to resist: —
Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul!

Light. Run for the table.

K. Edw. O spare me, or despatch me in a trice.

[*MATREVIS brings in a table.*

Light. So, lay the table down, and stamp on it,
But not too hard, lest that you bruise his body.

[*KING EDWARD is murdered.*

Mat. I fear me that this cry will raise the town,
And therefore, let us take horse and away.

Light. Tell me, sirs, was it not bravely done?

Gur. Excellent well: take this for thy reward.

[*GURNEY stabs LIGHTBORN, who dies.*

Come, let us cast the body in the moat,
And bear the king's to Mortimer our lord:
Away.

[*Excunt with the bodies.*

SCENE VI.—AN APARTMENT IN THE ROYAL PALACE

Enter Young MORTIMER and MATREVIS.

Y. Mor. Is't done, Matrevis, and the murderer dead?

Mat. Ay, my good lord; I would it were undone!

Y. Mor. Matrevis, if thou now growest penitent
I'll be thy ghostly father; therefore choose.
Whether thou wilt be secret in this,
Or else die by the hand of Mortimer.

Mat. Gurney, my lord, is fled, and will, I fear
Betray us both, therefore let me fly.

Y. Mor. Fly to the savages!

Mat. I humbly thank your honour.

[*Exit.*

Y. Mor. As for myself, I stand as Jove's huge tree,
And others are but shrubs compared to me.

All tremble at my name, and I fear none ;
Let's see who dare impeach me for his death !

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. Ah, Mortimer, the king my son hath news
His father's dead, and we have murdered him !

Y. Mor. What if he have ? the king is yet a child.

Q. Isab. Ay, but he tears his hair, and wrings his hands,
And vows to be revenged upon us both.
Into the council-chamber he is gone,
To crave the aid and succour of his peers.
Ay me ! see where he comes, and they with him ;
Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedy.

Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, Lords, and Attendants.

1st Lord. Fear not, my lord, know that you are a king.

K. Edw. Third. Villain ! —

Y. Mor. Ho, now, my lord !

K. Edw. Third. Think not that I am frighted with thy words !
My father's murdered through thy treachery ;
And thou shalt die, and on his mournful hearse
Thy hateful and accursèd head shall lie,
To witness to the world, that by thy means
His kingly body was too soon interred.

Q. Isab. Weep not, sweet son !

K. Edw. Third. Forbid me not to weep ; he was my father ;
And, had you loved him half so well as I,
You could not bear his death thus patiently.
But you, I fear, conspired with Mortimer.

1st Lord. Why speak you not unto my lord the king ?

Y. Mor. Because I think it scorn to be accused.

Who is the man dares say I murdered him ?

K. Edw. Third. Traitor ! in me my loving father speaks,
And plainly saith, 'twas thou that murder'dst him.

Y. Mor. But has your grace no other proof than this ?

K. Edw. Third. Yes, if this be the hand of Mortimer.

[*Shewing letter.*

Y. Mor. False Gurney hath betrayed me and himself.

Q. Isab. I feared as much ; murder can not be hid. [*Aside.*

Y. Mor. It is my hand ; what gather you by this ?

K. Edw. Third. That thither thou didst send a murderer.

Y. Mor. What murderer ? Bring forth the man I sent.

K. Edw. Third. Ah, Mortimer, thou knowest that he is slain ;
And so shalt thou be too — Why stays he here ?

Bring him unto a hurdle, drag him forth ;
Hang him, I say, and set his quarters up ;
But bring his head back presently to me.

Q. Isab. For my sake, sweet son, pity Mortimer.

Y. Mor. Madam, entreat not, I will rather die,
Than sue for life unto a paltry boy.

K. Edw. Third. Hence with the traitor ! with the murderer !

Y. Mor. Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
There is a point, to which when men aspire,
They tumble headlong down : that point I touched,
And, seeing there was no place to mount up higher,
Why should I grieve at my declining fall ? —
Farewell, fair queen ; weep not for Mortimer,
That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown.

K. Edw. Third. What ! suffer you the traitor to delay ?

[*Young MORTIMER is taken away by*
1st Lord and Attendants.]

Q. Isab. As thou receivdest thy life from me,
Spill not the blood of gentle Mortimer !

K. Edw. Third. This argues that you spilt my father's blood,
Else would you not entreat for Mortimer.

Q. Isab. I spill his blood ? no.

K. Edw. Third. Ay, madam, you ; for so the rumour runs.

Q. Isab. That rumour is untrue ; for loving thee,
Is this report raised on poor Isabel.

K. Edw. Third. I do not think her so unnatural.

2nd Lord. My lord, I fear me it will prove too true.

K. Edw. Third. Mother, you are suspected for his death,
And therefore we commit you to the Tower
Till farther trial may be made thereof ;
If you be guilty, though I be your son,
Think not to find me slack or pitiful.

Q. Isab. Nay, to my death, for too long have I lived,
Whenas my son thinks to abridge my days.

K. Edw. Third. Away with her, her words enforce these tears,
And I shall pity her if she speak again.

Q. Isab. Shall I not mourn for my beloved lord,
And with the rest accompany him to his grave ?

2nd Lord. Thus, madam, 'tis the king's will you shall hence.

Q. Isab. He hath forgotten me ; stay, I am his mother.

2nd Lord. That boots not ; therefore, gentle madam, go.

Q. Isab. Then come, sweet death, and rid me of this grief.
[*Exit.*]

Re-enter 1st Lord, with the head of Young MORTIMER.

1st Lord, My lord, here is the head of Mortimer.

K. Edw. Third. Go fetch my father's hearse, where it shall lie ;

And bring my funeral robes. *[Exeunt Attendants.*

Accursèd head,

Could I have ruled thee then, as I do now,

Thou had'st not hatched this monstrous treachery ! —

Here comes the hearse ; help me to mourn, my lords.

Re-enter Attendants with the hearse and funeral robes.

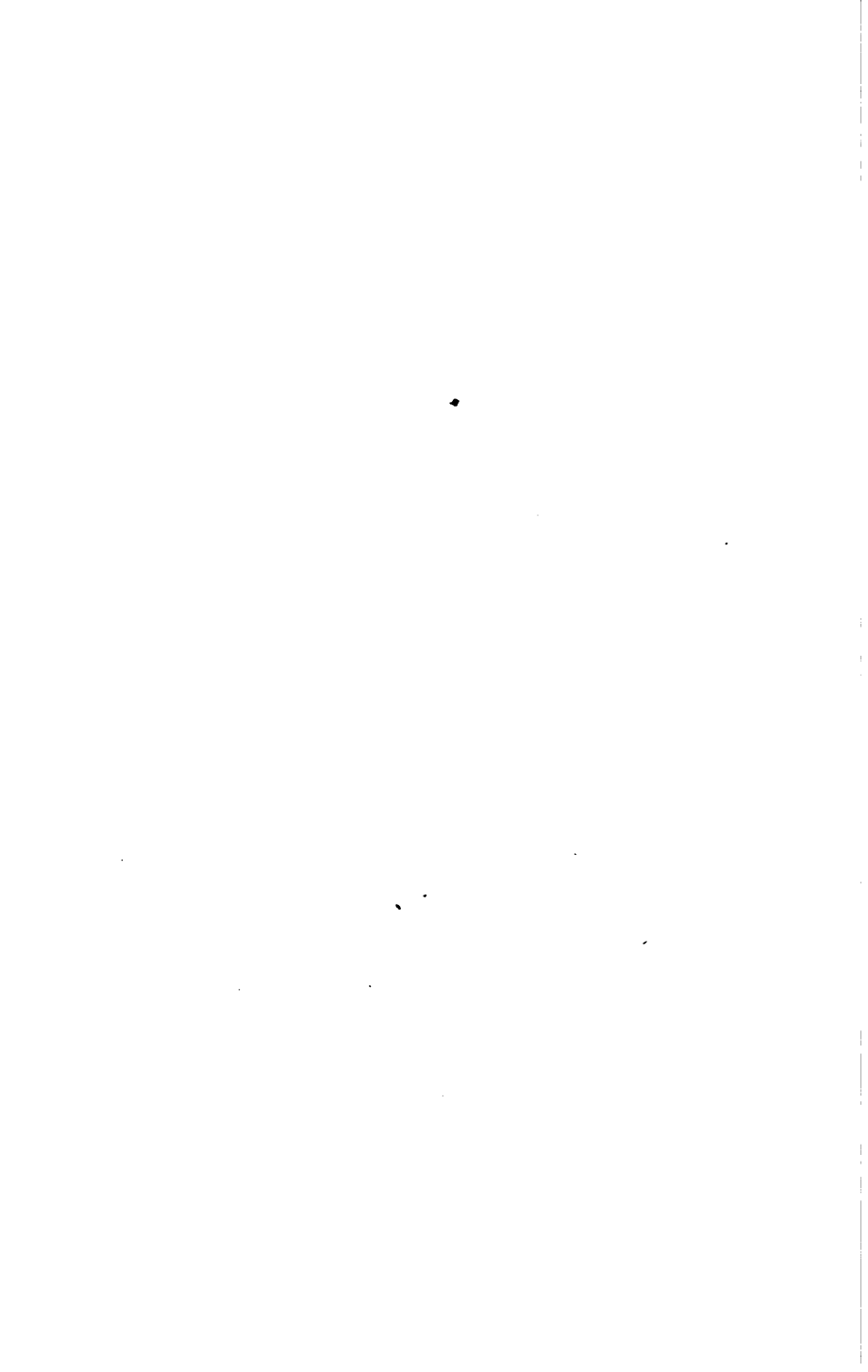
Sweet father, here unto thy murdered ghost

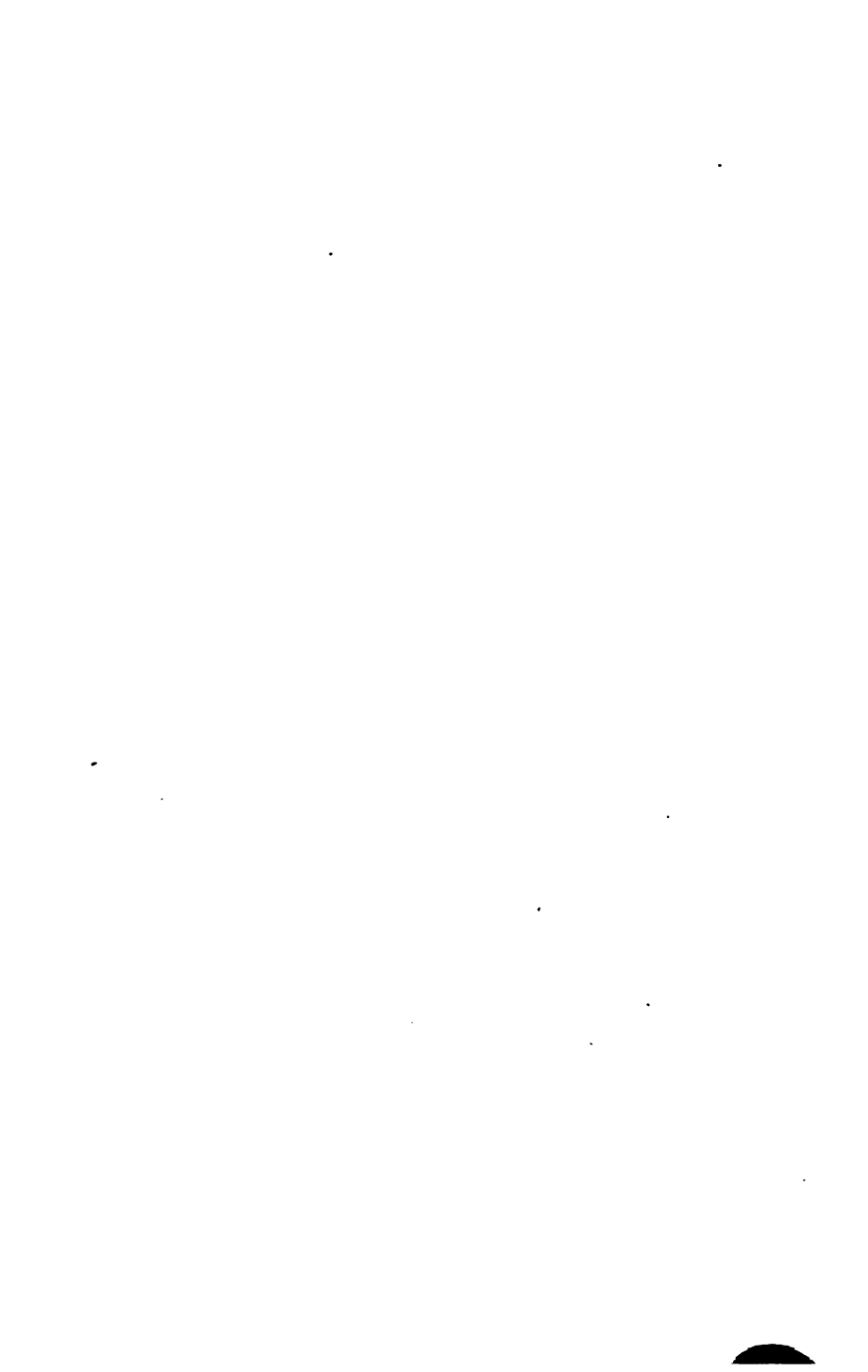
I offer up this wicked traitor's head ;

And let these tears, distilling from mine eyes,

Be witness of my grief and innocence.

[Exeunt.







BEN JONSON

From an old engraving

THE ALCHEMIST

BY

BEN JONSON

BEN JONSON was born in Westminster in 1573 or 1574. He was the son of a clergyman who died before the birth of the child, and his mother a few years later married a bricklayer. Ben was educated first at Westminster school, and afterward worked with his stepfather. It is said that he assisted in building Lincoln's Inn. Then he enlisted as a soldier, and served through one campaign in Flanders, after which he entered St. John's College, Cambridge. He went upon the stage, but was not successful as an actor, and finally found his true vocation as a dramatist. He was improvident in his habits, twice changed his religious faith, and was apparently somewhat quarrelsome; he had a fierce wrangle with Dekker the dramatist, and in a duel he killed Gabriel Spenser, an actor, for which he was imprisoned. Later, for reflections on the Scottish nation in the comedy of "Eastward Hoe," the three authors of it — Jonson, Chapman, and Marston — were thrown into prison. But James soon pardoned them and employed Jonson in writing court entertainments. In 1613 Jonson travelled on the continent as tutor to a son of Sir Walter Raleigh, and six years later he was appointed poet laureate. At the same time he made a walking tour to Scotland, and had a notable visit with Drummond of Hawthornden. In his last years he was palsied. He died August 6, 1637, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, and Sir John Young caused to be inscribed on the stone the famous epitaph "O rare Ben Jonson." Jonson published a revised edition of his works in 1616; what he produced after that date had little value. The principal memoir is by Gifford, prefixed to an edition that was issued in 1816. This edition contains seventeen plays (all but two of which had been produced on the stage), more than thirty masks and interludes, and epigrams, translations, and miscellaneous pieces. His translation from Philostratus, "Drink to me only with thine eyes," his epitaph on the Countess of Pembroke, and his verses on Shakespeare are famous. His best plays are "Every Man in his Humour," "Cynthia's Revels," "Volpone," "Epicene, or the Silent Woman," "Catiline," and above all "The Alchemist." Shakespeare appeared as an actor in some of them. Jonson was a member of the Mermaid Club, and founded the Apollo Club.

TO THE READER

If thou beest more, thou art an understander, and then I trust thee. If thou art one that takest up, and but a pretender, beware of what hands thou receivest thy commodity; for thou wert never more fair in the way to be cozened than in this age, in poetry, especially in plays: wherein now the concupiscence of dances and of antics so reigneth, as to run away from Nature and be afraid of her is the only point of Art that tickles the spectators. But how out of purpose and place do I name Art? When the professors are grown so obstinate contemnners of it, and presumers on their own naturals, as they are deriders of all diligence that way, and, by simple mocking at the terms, when they understand not the things, think to get off wittily with their ignorance. Nay, they are esteemed the more learned and sufficient for this, by the many, through their excellent vice of judgment. For they commend writers as they do fencers and wrestlers; who, if they come in robustiously, and put for it with a great deal of violence, are received for the braver fellows: when many times their own rudeness is the cause of their disgrace, and a little touch of their adversary gives all that boisterous force the foil. I deny not but that these men, who always seek to do more than enough, may some time happen on something that is good and great; but very seldom: and when it comes it doth not recompense the rest of their ill. It sticks out, perhaps, and is more eminent, because all is sordid and vile about it; as lights are more discerned in a thick darkness than a faint shadow. I speak not this out of a hope to do good to any man against his will; for I know, if it were put to the question of theirs and mine, the worse would find more suffrages: because the most favour common errors. But I give thee this warning, that there is a great difference between those that, to gain the opinion of copy, utter all they can, however unfitly; and those that use election and a mean. For it is only the disease of the unskilful to think rude things greater than polished, or scattered more numerous than composed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SUBTLE, the Alchemist.

FACE, the Housekeeper.

DOL COMMON, their Colleague.

DAPPER, a Clerk.

DRUGGER, a Tobacco Man.

LOVEWIT, Master of the House.

EPICURE MAMMON, a Knight.

PERTINAX SURLY, a Gamester.

TRIBULATION WHOLESOME, a Pastor of Amsterdam.

ANANIAS, a Deacon there.

KASTRIL, the angry Boy.

DAME PLIANT, his Sister, a Widow.

Neighbours, Officers, Mutes,

SCENE — LONDON

ARGUMENT

T HE sickness hot, a master quit, for fear,
H is house in town, and left one servant there.
E ase him corrupted, and gave means to know

A cheater and his punk; who now brought low,
L eaving their narrow practice, were become
C ozeners at large; and only wanting some
H ouse to set up, with him they here contract,
E ach for a share, and all begin to act.
M uch company they draw, and much abuse,
I n casting figures, telling fortunes, news,
S elling of flies, false putting of the stone,
T ill it, and they, and all in fume are gone.

PROLOGUE

FORTUNE, that favours fools, these two short hours
We wish away, both for your sakes and ours,
Judging Spectators; and desire, in place,
To the author justice, to ourselves but grace.
Our scene is London, 'cause we would make known
No country's mirth is better than our own:
No clime breeds better matter, for your bore,
Shark, squire, impostor, many persons more,
Whose manners, now called humours, feed the stage;
And which have still been subject for the rage
Or spleen of comic writers. Though this pen
Did never aim to grieve, but better, men;
Howe'er the age he lives in doth endure
The vices that she breeds, above their cure.
But when the wholesome remedies are sweet,
And in their working gain and profit meet,
He hopes to find no spirit so much diseased
But will with such fair correctives be pleased:
For here he doth not fear who can apply.
If there be any that will sit so nigh
Unto the stream, to look what it doth run,
They shall find things they'd think or wish were done;
They are so natural follies, but so shown
As even the doers may see, and yet not own.

THE ALCHEMIST

ACT I

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN LOVEWIT'S HOUSE

*Enter FACE, in a captain's uniform, with his sword drawn, and
SUBTLE with a vial, quarrelling, and followed by DOL COMMON.*

FACE. Believe't, I will.

Sub. Thy worst. I spit at thee.

Dol. Have you your wits? Why, gentlemen, for
love —

Face. Sirrah, I'll strip you —

Sub. What to do?

Face. Rogue, rogue! — out of all your sleights.

Dol. Nay, look ye, sovereign, general, are you madmen?

Sub. Oh, let the wild sheep loose. I'll gum your silks
With good strong water, an you come.

Dol. Will you have
The neighbours hear you? will you betray all?
Hark! I hear somebody.

Face. Sirrah —

Sub. I shall mar
All that the traitor has made, if you approach.

Face. You most notorious whelp, you insolent slave,
Dare you do this?

Sub. Yes, faith; yes, faith.

Face. Why, who
Am I, my mongrel? Who am I?

Sub. I'll tell you,
Since you know not yourself.

Face. Speak lower, rogue.

Sub. Yes, you were once (time's not long past) the good,
Honest, plain, livery three pound thrum that kept
Your master's worship's house here in the Friars,
For the vacations —

Face. Will you be so loud?

Sub. Since, by my means, translated suburb-captain.

Face. By your means, doctor dog!

Sub. Within man's memory,
All this I speak of.

Face. Why, I pray you, have I
Been countenanced by you, or you by me?
Do but collect, sir, where I met you first.

Sub. I do not hear well.

Face. Not of this, I think it
But I shall put you in mind, sir ; — at Pie-corner,
Taking your meal of steam in from cooks' stalls,
Where, like the father of hunger, you did walk
Piteously costive, with your pinch'd horn-nose,
And your complexion of the Roman wash,
Stuck full of black and melancholic worms,
Like powder corns shot at the artillery yard.

Sub. I wish you could advance your voice a little.

Face. When you went pinn'd up in the several rags
You had raked and pick'd from dunghills, before day ;
Your feet in mouldy slippers, for your kibes ;
A felt of rug, and a thin threaden cloak —

Sub. So, sir !

Face. When all your alchemy and your algebra,
Your minerals, vegetals, and animals,
Your conjuring, cozening, and your dozen of trades,
Could not relieve your corps with so much linen
Would make you tinder, but to see a fire,
I gave you countenance, credit for your coals,
Your stills, your glasses, your materials ;
Built you a furnace, drew you customers,
Advanced all your black arts : lent you, beside,
A house to practise in —

Sub. Your master's house !

Face. Where you have studied the more thriving skill
Of cozening since.

Sub. Yes, in your master's house.
You and the rats here kept possession.
Make it not strange. I know you were one could keep
The buttery-hatch still lock'd, and save the chippings,
Sell the dole beer to aquavitæ men,
The which, together with your Christmas vails
At post-and-pair, your letting out of counters,
Made you a pretty stock, some twenty marks,
And gave you credit to converse with cobwebs,
Here, since your mistress' death hath broke up house.

Face. You might talk softer, rascal.

Sub. No, you scarab,

I'll thunder you in pieces : I will teach you
How to beware to tempt a Fury again,
That carries tempest in his hand and voice.

Face. The place has made you valiant.

Sub. No, your clothes.—

Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee out of dung,
So poor, so wretched, when no living thing
Would keep thee company, but a spider, or worse?
Rais'd thee from brooms, and dust, and watering-pots,
Sublimed thee, and exalted thee, and fix'd thee
In the third region, call'd our state of grace?
Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
Would twice have won me the Philosopher's work?
Put thee in words and fashion, made thee fit
For more than ordinary fellowships?
Giv'n thee thy oaths, thy quarrelling dimensions,
Thy rules to cheat at horse-race, cockpit, cards, dice,
Or whatever gallant tincture else?
Made thee a second in mine own great art?
And have I this for thanks ! Do you rebel,
Do you fly out in the projection?
Would you be gone now?

Dol. Gentlemen, what mean you?
Will you mar all?

Sub. Slave, thou hadst had no name —

Dol. Will you undo yourselves with civil war?

Sub. Never been known, past *equi clibanum*,
The heat of horse-dung, under ground, in cellars,
Or an ale-house darker than deaf John's; been lost
To all mankind but laundresses and tapsters,
Had not I been.

Dol. Do you know who hears you, sovereign?

Face. Sirrah —

Dol. Nay, general, I thought you were civil.

Face. I shall turn desperate if you grow thus loud.

Sub. And hang thyself, I care not.

Face. Hang thee, collier,
And all thy pots and pans, in picture, I will,
Since thou hast moved me —

Dol. Oh, this will o'erthrow all.

Face. Write thee up bawd in Paul's, have all thy tricks
Of cozening with a hollow coal, dust, scrapings,
Searching for things lost, with a sieve and shears,
Erecting figures in your rows of houses,
And taking in of shadows with a glass,

Told in red letters; and a face cut for thee
Worse than Gamaliel Ratsey's.

Dol. Are you sound?

Have you your senses, masters?

Face. I will have

A book, but barely reckoning thy impostures,
Shall prove a true philosopher's stone to printers.

Sub. Away, you trencher-rascal!

Face. Out, you log-leech!

The vomit of all prisons —

Dol. Will you be

Your own destructions, gentlemen?

Face. Still spewed out

For lying too heavy on the basket.

Sub. Cheater!

Face. Bawd!

Sub. Cowherd!

Face. Conjurer!

Sub. Cut-purse!

Face. Witch!

Dol. O me!

We are ruin'd, lost! Have you no more regard
To your reputations? Where's your judgment? 'Slight
Have yet some care of me, of your republic —

Face. Away this brach! I'll bring thee, rogue, within
The statute of sorcery, tricesimo tertio
Of Harry the Eighth: ay, and perhaps thy neck
Within a noose, for laundring gold and barbing it.

Dol. [*Snatches FACE's sword.*] You'll bring your head within
a cockscorn, will you?

And you, sir, with your menstree. [*Dashes SUBTLE's vial out
of his hand.*] Gather it up. —

'Sdeath, you abominable pair of stinkards,
Leave off your barking, and grow one again,
Or, by the light that shines, I'll cut your throats.

I'll not be made a prey unto the marshal
For ne'er a snarling dog-bolt of you both.

Have you together cozen'd all this while,
And all the world, and shall it now be said
You've made most courteous shift to cozen yourselves?

You will accuse him! you will bring him in [*To FACE.*
Within the statute? Who shall take your word?

A rascal, upstart, apocryphal captain,
Whom not a Puritan in Blackfriars will trust
So much as for a feather: and you, too,

[*To SUBTLE.*

Will give the cause, forsooth ! you will insult,
And claim a primacy in the divisions !
You must be chief ! as if you only had
The powder to project with, and the work
Were not begun out of equality ?
The venture tripartite ? all things in common ?
Without priority ? 'Sdeath ! you perpetual curs,
Fall to your couples again, and cozen kindly,
And heartily, and lovingly, as you should,
And lose not the beginning of a term,
Or, by this hand, I shall grow factious too,
And take my part, and quit you.

Face. 'Tis his fault ;

He ever murmurs, and objects his pains,
And says, the weight of all lies upon him.

Sub. Why, so it does.

Dol. How does it ? Do not we
Sustain our parts ?

Sub. Yes, but they are not equal.

Dol. Why, if your part exceed to-day, I hope
Ours may to-morrow match it.

Sub. Ay, they may.

Dol. May murmuring mastiff ! Ay, and do. Death on me !
Help me to throttle him. [*Seizes SUB. by the throat.*]

Sub. Dorothy ! Mistress Dorothy !

'Ods precious, I'll do anything. What do you mean ?

Dol. Because o' your fermentation and cibation ?

Sub. Not I, by heaven ——

Dol. Your Sol and Luna —— Help me. [*To FACE.*]

Sub. Would I were hang'd then ? I'll conform myself.

Dol. Will you, sir ? Do so then, and quickly : swear.

Sub. What shall I swear ?

Dol. To leave your faction, sir,
And labour kindly in the common work.

Sub. Let me not breathe if I meant aught beside.
I only used those speeches as a spur
To him.

Dol. I hope we need no spurs, sir. Do we ?

Face. 'Slid, prove to-day who shall shark best.

Sub. Agreed.

Dol. Yes, and work close and friendly.

Sub. 'Slight, the knot
Shall grow the stronger for this breach, with me.

[*They shake hands.*]

Dol. Why, so, my good baboons ! Shall we go make

A sort of sober, scurvy, precise neighbours,
 That scarce have smiled twice since the king came in,
 A feast of laughter at our follies? Rascals
 Would run themselves from breath to see me ride,
 Or you t'have but a hole to thrust your heads in,
 For which you should pay ear-rent? No, agree.
 And may don Provost ride a feasting long
 In his old velvet jerkin and stain'd scarfs,
 My noble sovereign and worthy general,
 Ere we contribute a new crewel garter
 To his most worsted worship.

Sub. Royal Dol!

Spoken like Claridiana, and thyself.

Face. For which at supper thou shalt sit in triumph,
 And not be styled Dol Common, but Dol Proper,
 Dol Singular: the longest cut at night
 Shall draw thee for his Doll Particular. [*Bell rings without.*

Sub. Who's that? One rings. To the window, Dol. [*Exit*

DOL.] Pray heaven

The master do not trouble us this quarter.

Face. Oh, fear not him. While there dies one a week
 O' the plague, he's safe from thinking toward London:
 Beside, he's busy at his hop-yards now;
 I had a letter from him. If he do,
 He'll send such word for airing of the house
 As you shall have sufficient time to quit it:
 Though we break up a fortnight, 'tis no matter.

Re-enter DOL.

Sub. Who is it, Dol?

Dol. A fine young quodling.

Face. Oh,

My lawyer's clerk I lighted on last night
 In Holborn, at the Dagger. He would have
 (I told you of him) a familiar,
 To rifle with at horses, and win cups.

Dol. Oh, let him in.

Sub. Stay. Who shall do't?

Face. Get you

Your robes on: I will meet him as going out.

Dol. And what shall I do?

Face. Not be seen; away!

[*Exit* DOL.]

Seem you very reserv'd.

Sub. Enough.

[*Exit*

Face. [*Aloud and retiring.*] God be wi' you, sir,

I pray you, let him know that I was here :
His name is Dapper. I would gladly have staid, but ——

Dap. [*Within.*] Captain, I am here.

Face. Who's that? — He's come, I think, doctor.

Enter DAPPER.

Good faith, sir, I was going away.

Dap. In truth,

I am very sorry, captain.

Face. But I thought

Sure I should meet you.

Dap. Ay, I am very glad,

I had a scurvy writ or two to make,

And I had lent my watch last night to one

That dines to-day at the sheriff's, and so was robb'd

Of my pastime.

Re-enter SUBTLE, in his velvet cap and gown.

Is this the cunning-man?

Face. This is his worship.

Dap. Is he a doctor?

Face. Yes.

Dap. And you have broke with him, captain?

Face. Ay.

Dap. And how?

Face. Faith, he does make the matter, sir, so dainty
I know not what to say.

Dap. Not so, good captain.

Face. Would I were fairly rid of it, believe me.

Dap. Nay, now you grieve me, sir. Why should you wish so?
I dare assure you, I'll not be ungrateful.

Face. I can not think you will, sir. But the law
Is such a thing —— and then he says, Read's matter
Falling so lately ——

Dap. Read ! he was an ass,
And dealt, sir, with a fool.

Face. It was a clerk, sir.

Dap. A clerk !

Face. Nay, hear me, sir, you know the law
Better, I think ——

Dap. I should, sir, and the danger :
You know, I showed the statute to you.

Face. You did so.

Dap. And will I tell then ! By this hand of flesh,
Would it might never write good court-hand more.

If I discover. What do you think of me,
That I am a Chiause?

Face. What's that?

Dap. The Turk was here.

As one would say, do you think I am a Turk?

Face. I'll tell the doctor so.

Dap. Do, good sweet captain.

Face. Come, noble doctor, pray thee, let's prevail;
This is the gentleman, and he is no chiause.

Sub. Captain, I have return'd you all my answer.
I would do much, sir, for your love; but this
I neither may nor can.

Face. Tut, do not say so.

You deal now with a noble fellow, doctor.
One that will thank you richly, and he is no chiause.
Let that, sir, move you.

Sub. Pray you, forbear —

Face. He has
Four angels here.

Sub. You do me wrong, good sir.

Face. Doctor, wherein? to tempt you with these spirits?

Sub. To tempt my art and love, sir, to my peril.
'Fore heaven, I scarce can think you are my friend,
That so would draw me to apparent danger.

Face. I draw you! A horse draw you, and a halter,
You, and your flies together —

Dap. Nay, good captain.

Face. That know no difference of men.

Sub. Good words, sir.

Face. Good deeds, sir, Doctor Dogs-meat. 'Slight, I bring you
No cheating Clim of the Cloughs, or Claribels,
That look as big as five-and-fifty, and flush;
And spit out secrets like hot custard —

Dap. Captain!

Face. Nor any melancholic under-scribe,
Shall tell the vicar, but a special gentle,
That is the heir to forty marks a year,
Consorts with the small poets of the time,
Is the sole hope of his old grandmother;
That knows the law, and writes you six fair hands,
Is a fine clerk, and has his cyphering perfect,
Will take his oath o' the Greek Testament,
If need be, in his pocket; and can court
His mistress out of Ovid.

Dap. Nay, dear captain —

Face. Did you not tell me so?

Dap. Yes; but I'd have you

Use Master Doctor with some more respect.

Face. Hang him, proud stag, with his broad velvet head!—

But for your sake, I'd choke ere I would change

An article of breath with such a puckfist:

Come, let's be gone.

[*Going.*

Sub. Pray you, let me speak with you.

Dap. His worship calls you, captain.

Face. I am sorry

I e'er embark'd myself in such a business.

Dap. Nay, good sir; he did call you.

Face. Will he take then?

Sub. First, hear me——

Face. Not a syllable, 'less you take.

Sub. Pray you, sir——

Face. Upon no terms, but an *assumpsit*.

Sub. Your humour must be law. [*He takes the four angels.*

Face. Why, now, sir, talk.

Now I dare hear you with mine honour. Speak.

So may this gentleman too.

Sub. Why, sir——

[*Offering to whisper FACE.*

Face. No whispering.

Sub. 'Fore heaven, you do not apprehend the loss
You do yourself in this.

Face. Wherein? for what?

Sub. Marry, to be so importunate for one
That, when he has it, will undo you all;
He'll win up all the money in the town.

Face. How!

Sub. Yes, and blow up gamester after gamester,
As they do crackers in a puppet play.
If I do give him a familiar,
Give you him all you play for; never set him:
For he will have it.

Face. You are mistaken, doctor.

Why he does ask one but for cups and horses
A rifling fly; none of your great familiars.

Dap. Yes, captain, I would have it for all games.

Sub. I told you so.

Face. [*Taking DAP. aside.*] 'Slight, that is a new business!
I understood you, a tame bird, to fly
Twice in a term, or so, on Friday nights,
When you had left the office, for a nag
Of forty or fifty shillings.

Dap. Ay, 'tis true, sir ;
But I do think now I shall leave the law,
And therefore ——

Face. Why, this changes quite the case.
Do you think that I dare move him?

Dap. If you please, sir ;
All's one to him, I see.

Face. What ! for that money?
I can not with my conscience ; nor should you
Make the request, methinks.

Dap. No, sir ; I mean
To add consideration.

Face. Why, then, sir,
I'll try. [*Goes to* SUBTLE.] Say that it were for all games,
doctor?

Sub. I say thee, not a mouth shall eat for him
At any ordinary, but on the score,
That is a gaming mouth, conceive me.

Face. Indeed !

Sub. He'll draw you all the treasure of the realm,
If it be set him.

Face. Speak you this from art?

Sub. Ay, sir, and reason too, the ground of art.
He is of the only best complexion
The Queen of Fairy loves.

Face. What ! Is he?

Sub. Peace.

He'll overhear you. Sir, should she but see him ——

Face. What?

Sub. Do not you tell him.

Face. Will he win at cards too?

Sub. The spirits of dead Holland, living Isaac,
You'd swear were in him ! such a vigorous luck
As can not be resisted. 'Slight, he'll put
Six of your gallants to a cloke, indeed.

Face. A strange success, that some man shall be born.

Sub. He hears you, man ——

Dap. Sir, I'll not be ungrateful.

Face. Faith, I have confidence in his good nature :
You hear, he says he will not be ungrateful.

Sub. Why, as you please ; my venture follows yours.

Face. Troth, do it, doctor ; think him trusty, and make him.
He may make us both happy in an hour ;
Win some five thousand pounds, and send us two on't.

Dap. Believe it, and I will, sir.

Face. And you shall, sir. *[Takes him aside.*
You have heard all!

Dap. No, what was't? Nothing, I, sir.

Face. Nothing!

Dap. A little, sir.

Face. Well, a rare star
Reigned at your birth.

Dap. At mine, sir! No.

Face. The doctor
Swears that you are——

Sub. Nay, captain, you'll tell all now.

Face. Allied to the Queen of Fairy.

Dap. Who? that I am?
Believe it no such matter——

Face. Yes, and that

You were born with a caul on your head.

Dap. Who says so?

Face. Come,
You know it well enough, though you dissemble it.

Dap. I' fac, I do not: you are mistaken.

Face. How!

Swear by your fac? And in a thing so known
Unto the doctor? How shall we, sir, trust you
In the other matter? can we ever think,
When you have won five or six thousand pounds,
You'll send us shares in 't, by this rate?

Dap. By Jove, sir,
I'll win ten thousand pounds, and send you half.
I' fac 's no oath.

Sub. No, no; he did but jest.

Face. Go to. Go thank the doctor: he's your friend,
To take it so.

Dap. I thank his worship.

Face. So!
Another angel.

Dap. Must I?

Face. Must you! 'Slight,
What else is thanks? Will you be trivial?—Doctor,
[DAPPER gives him the money.

When must he come for his familiar?

Dap. Shall I not have it with me?

Sub. Oh, good sir!
There must be a world of ceremonies pass;
You must be bath'd and fumigated first:
Besides, the Queen of Fairy does not rise
Till it be noon.

Face. Not, if she danced, to-night.

Sub. And she must bless it.

Face. Did you never see
Her royal grace yet?

Dap. Whom?

Face. Your aunt of Fairy?

Sub. Not since she kissed him in the cradle, captain;
I can resolve you that.

Face. Well, see her grace,
Whate'er it cost you, for a thing that I know.
It will be somewhat hard to compass; but
However, see her. You are made, believe it,
If you can see her. Her grace is a lone woman,
And very rich; and if she take a fancy,
She will do strange things. See her at any hand.
'Slid, she may hap to leave you all she has:
It is the doctor's fear.

Dap. How will't be done, then?

Face. Let me alone, take you no thought. Do you
But say to me, Captain, I'll see her grace.

Dap. Captain, I'll see her grace.

Face. Enough.

[*Knocking within.*]

Sub. Who's there?

Anon. — Conduct him forth by the back way. [*Aside to FACE.*
Sir, against one o'clock prepare yourself,
Till when you must be fasting; only take
Three drops of vinegar in at your nose,
Two at your mouth, and one at either ear;
Then bathe your fingers' end and wash your eyes,
To sharpen your five senses, and cry "hum"
Thrice, and then "buz" as often; and then come. [*Exit.*

Face. Can you remember this?

Dap. I warrant you.

Face. Well then, away. It is but your bestowing
Some twenty nobles 'mong her grace's servants,
And put on a clean shirt: you do not know
What grace her grace may do you in clean linen.

[*Exeunt FACE and DAPPER.*]

Sub. [*Within.*] Come in! Good wives, I pray you forbear
me now;
Troth I can do you no good till afternoon.

Re-enters, followed by DRUGGER.

What is your name, say you — Abel Drugger?

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. A seller of tobacco?

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. Umph!

Free of the grocers?

Drug. Ay, an 't please you.

Sub. Well ——

Your business, Abel?

Drug. This, an't please your worship;
I am a young beginner, and am building
Of a new shop, an't like your worship, just
At corner of a street: — Here is the plot on 't —
And I would know by art, sir, of your worship,
Which way I should make my door, by necromancy,
And where my shelves: and which should be for boxes,
And which for pots. I would be glad to thrive, sir:
And I was wish'd to your worship by a gentleman,
One Captain Face, that says you know men's planets,
And their good angels, and their bad.

Sub. I do,
If I do see them —

Re-enter FACE.

Face. What! my honest Abel?
Thou art well met here.

Drug. Troth, sir, I was speaking,
Just as your worship came here, of your worship:
I pray you, speak for me to Master Doctor.

Face. He shall do anything. — Doctor do you hear?
This is my friend, Abel, an honest fellow;
He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not
Sophisticate it with sack-lees or oil,
Nor washes it in muscadel and grains,
Nor buries it in gravel underground,
Wrapp'd up in greasy leather or sour clouts;
But keeps it in fine lily pots, that, open'd,
Smell like conserve of roses or French beans.
He has his maple block, his silver tongs,
Winchester pipes, and fire of Juniper:
A neat, spruce, honest fellow, and no goldsmith.

Sub. He is a fortunate fellow, that I am sure on.

Face. Already, sir, have you found it? Lo thee, Abel!

Sub. And in right way toward riches ——

Face. Sir!

Sub. This summer

He will be of the clothing of his company,
And next spring call'd to the scarlet ; spend what he can.

Face. What, and so little beard ?

Sub. Sir, you must think

He may have a receipt to make hair come :
But he'll be wise, preserve his youth, and fine for't ;
His fortune looks for him another way.

Face. 'Slid, doctor, how canst thou know this so soon ?
I am amused at that !

Sub. By a rule, captain,
In metoposcopy, which I do work by ;
A certain star in the forehead, which you see not.
Your chestnut or your olive-colour'd face
Does never fail : and your long ear doth promise.
I knew't by certain spots, too, in his teeth,
And on the nail of his mercurial finger.

Face. Which finger's that ?

Sub. His little finger. Look.
You were born upon a Wednesday ?

Drug. Yes, indeed, sir.

Sub. The thumb, in chiromancy, we give Venus ;
The fore-finger to Jove ; the midst to Saturn ;
The ring to Sol ; the least to Mercury,
Who was the lord, sir, of his horoscope,
His house of life being Libra ; which foreshowed
He should be a merchant, and should trade with balance.

Face. Why, this is strange ! Is it not, honest Nab ?

Sub. There is a ship now coming from Ormus
That shall yield him such a commodity
Of drugs. This is the west, and this the south ?

[*Pointing to the plan.*]

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. And those are your two sides ?

Drug. Ay, sir.

Sub. Make me your door, then, south ; your broadside, west :
And on the east side of your shop, aloft,
Write Mathlai, Tarmiel, and Baraborat ;
Upon the north part, Rael, Velel, Thiel.
They are the names of those mercurial spirits
That do fright flies from boxes.

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. And

Beneath your threshold bury me a loadstone
To draw in gallants that wear spurs : the rest
They'll seem to follow.

Face. That's a secret, Nab!

Sub. And on your stall, a puppet, with a vice
And a court-fucus to call city-dames :
You shall deal much with minerals.

Drug. Sir, I have
At home, already ——

Sub. Ay, I know you have arsenic,
Vitriol, sal-tartar, argaile, alkali,
Cinoper : I know all. — This fellow, captain,
Will come, in time, to be a great distiller,
And give assay — I will not say directly,
But very fair — at the philosopher's stone.

Face. Why, how now, Abel ! is this true ?

Drug. Good captain,
What must I give ?

[*Aside to FACE.*

Face. Nay, I'll not counsel thee.
Thou hear'st what wealth — (he says, spend what thou canst) —
Thou'rt like to come to.

Drug. I would gi' him a crown.

Face. A crown ! and toward such a fortune ? Heart,
Thou shalt rather gi' him thy shop. No gold about thee ?

Drug. Yes, I have a portague I have kept this half-year.

Face. Out on thee, Nab ! 'Slight, there was such an offer —
Shalt keep't no longer, I'll give 't him for thee. Doctor,
Nab prays your worship to drink this, and swears
He will appear more grateful as your skill
Does raise him in the world.

Drug. I would entreat
Another favour of his worship.

Face. What is't, Nab ?

Drug. But to look over, sir, my almanac,
And cross out my ill days, that I may neither
Bargain nor trust upon them.

Face. That he shall, Nab ;
Leave it, it shall be done 'gainst afternoon.

Sub. And a direction for his shelves.

Face. Now, Nab,
Art thou well pleased, Nab ?

Drug. 'Thank, sir, both your worships.

Face. Away. —

[*Exit DRUGGER.*

Why, now, you smoky persecutor of nature !
Now do you see that something's to be done
Besides your beech-coal and your corsive waters,
Your crosslets, crucibles, and cucurbites ?
You must have stuff brought home to you, to work on :

And yet you think I am at no expense
In searching out these veins, then following them,
Then trying them out. 'Fore God, my intelligence
Costs me more money than my share oft comes to,
In these rare works.

Sub. You are pleasant, sir.

Re-enter DOL.

How now !

What says my Dainty Dolkin ?

Dol. Yonder fishwife

Will not away. And there's your giantess,
Come out of Lambeth.

Sub. Heart, I can not speak with them.

Dol. Not afore night, I have told them in a voice,
Thorough the trunk, like one of your familiars.
But I have spied Sir Epicure Mammon —

Sub. Where ?

Dol. Coming along, at far end of the lane,
Slow of his feet, but earnest of his tongue
To one that's with him.

Sub. Face, go you, and shift.

[*Exit FACE.*

Dol. you must presently make ready too.

Dol. Why, what's the matter ?

Sub. Oh, I did look for him

With the sun's rising : marvel he could sleep ;
This is the day I am to perfect for him
The magisterium, our great work, the stone ;
And yield it, made, into his hands ; of which
He has this month talk'd as he were possess'd.
And now he's dealing pieces on't away. —
Methinks I see him entering ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox and plaguy houses,
Reaching his dose, walking Moorfields for lepers,
And offering citizens' wives pomander bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir ;
Searching the spital, to make old bones young ;
And the highways for beggars to make rich :
I see no end of his labours. He will make
Nature asham'd of her long sleep : when art,
Who's but a step-dame, shall do more than she,
In her best love to mankind, ever could :
If his dream lasts, he'll turn the age to gold.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—AN OUTER ROOM IN LOVEWIT'S HOUSE

Enter SIR EPICURE MAMMON and SURLY.

MAM. Come on, sir. Now, you set your foot on shore
In *Novo Orbe*; here's the rich Peru:
And there within, sir, are the golden mines,
Great Solomon's Ophir! he was sailing to 't,
Three years, but we have reach'd it in ten months.
This is the day wherein, to all my friends,
I will pronounce the happy word, **BE RICH**;

THIS DAY YOU SHALL BE SPECTATISSIMI.
You shall no more deal with the hollow die
Or the frail card. No more be at charge of keeping
The house of call for the young heir. No more
Shall thirst of satin, or the covetous hunger
Of velvet entrails for a rude-spun cloak,
To be display'd at Madam Augusta's, make
The sons of Sword and Hazard fall before
The golden calf, and on their knees, whole nights,
Commit idolatry with wine and trumpets:
Or go a feasting, after drum and ensign.

No more of this. You shall start up young viceroys,
And have your punks and punketees, my Surly.

And unto thee I speak it first, **BE RICH.**

Where is my Subtle, there? Within, ho!

Face. [Within.] Sir, he'll come to you by and by.

Mam. That is his fire-drake,

His Lungs, his Zephyrus, he that puffs his coals,
Till he firk nature up, in her own centre.

You are not faithful, sir. This night I'll change
All that is metal, in my house, to gold:

And early in the morning will I send
To all the plumbers and the pewterers,
And buy their tin and lead up; and to Lothbury
For all the copper.

Sur. What, and turn that too?

Mam. Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies! You admire now?

Sur. No, faith.

Mam. But when you see th' effects of the Great Medicine,
Of which one part projected on a hundred
Of Mercury, or Venus, or the moon,

Shall turn it to as many of the sun ;
Nay, to a thousand, so *ad infinitum* :
You will believe me.

Sur. Yes, when I see't I will.
But if my eyes do cozen me so, and I
Giving them no occasion, sure I'll have
A crow shall pluck them out next day.

Mam. Ha ! why ?
Do you think I fable with you ? I assure you,
He that has once the flower of the sun,
The perfect ruby, which we call elixir,
Not only can do that, but by its virtue
Can confer honour, love, respect, long life ;
Give safety, valour, yea, and victory,
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man of fourscore a child.

Sur. No doubt ; he's that already.

Mam. Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age ; make him get sons and daughters,
Young giants ; as our philosophers have done,
The ancient patriarchs, afore the flood,
But taking, once a week, on a knife's point,
The quantity of a grain of mustard of it ;
Become stout Marses, and beget young Cupids.

Sur. The decay'd vestals of Pict-hatch would thank you,
That keep the fire alive there.

Mam. 'Tis the secret
Of nature naturized 'gainst all infections,
Cures all diseases coming of all causes ;
A month's grief in a day, a year's in twelve ;
And of what age soever, in a month :
Past all the doses of your drugging doctors.
I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague
Out of the kingdom in three months.

Sur. And I'll
Be bound the players shall sing your praises then
Without their poets.

Mam. Sir, I'll do 't. Meantime,
I'll give away so much unto my man
Shall serve the whole city with preservative
Weekly ; each house his dose, and at the rate ——

Sur. As he that built the waterwork does with water ?

Mam. You are incredulous.

Sur. Faith, I have a humour

I would not willingly be gull'd. Your stone
Can not transmute me.

Mam. Pertinax, Surly,
Will you believe antiquity? records?
I'll show you a book where Moses and his sister,
And Solomon have written of the art;
Ay, and a treatise penn'd by Adam ——

Sur. How!

Mam. Of the philosopher's stone, and in High Dutch.

Sur. Did Adam write, sir, in High Dutch?

Mam. He did!

Which proves it was the primitive tongue.

Sur. What paper?

Mam. On cedar board.

Sur. Oh, that indeed, they say
Will last 'gainst worms.

Mam. 'Tis like your Irish wood
'Gainst cobwebs. I have a piece of Jason's fleece too,
Which was no other than a book of alchemy,
Writ in large sheepskin, a good fat ram-vellum.
Such was Pythagoras' thigh, Pandora's tub,
And all that fable of Medea's charms,
The manner of our work; the bulls, our furnace,
Still breathing fire; our argent-vive, the dragon:
The dragon's teeth, mercury sublimate,
That keeps the whiteness, hardness, and the biting;
And they are gather'd into Jason's helm,
The alembic, and then sow'd in Mars his field,
And thence sublimed so often, till they're fix'd.
Both this, the Hesperian garden, Cadmus' story,
Jove's shower, the boon of Midas, Argus' eyes,
Boccace his Demogorgon, thousands more,
All abstract riddles of our stone. —

Enter FACE as a Servant.

How now!

Do we succeed? Is our day come? and holds it?

Face. The evening will set red upon you, sir;
You have colour for it, crimson: the red ferment
Has done his office; three hours hence prepare you
To see projection.

Mam. Pertinax, my Surly,
Again I say to thee aloud, Be rich.
This day thou shalt have ingots; and to-morrow

Give lords th' affront. — Is it, my Zephyrus, right?
Blushes the bolt's head?

Face. Like a wench with child, sir,
That were but now discover'd to her master.

Mam. Excellent witty Lungs! — my only care is,
Where to get stuff enough now to project on;
This town will not half serve me.

Face. No, sir! Buy
The covering off o' churches.

Mam. That's true.

Face. Yes.

Let them stand bare, as do their auditory;
Or cap them, new, with shingles.

Mam. No, good thatch:
Thatch will lie light upon the rafters, Lungs. —
Lungs, I will manumit thee from the furnace;
I will restore thee thy complexion, Puff,
Lost in the embers; and repair this brain,
Hurt with the fume o' the metals.

Face. I have blown, sir,
Hard for your worship; thrown by many a coal,
When 'twas not beech; weigh'd those I put in, just,
To keep your heat still even; these bleared eyes
Have waked to read your several colours, sir,
Of the pale citron, the green lion, the crow,
The peacock's tail, the plumed swan.

Mam. And, lastly,
Thou hast descried the flower, the *sanguis agni*?

Face. Yes, sir.

Mam. Where's master?

Face. At his prayers, sir, he;
Good man, he's doing his devotions
For the success.

Mam. Lungs, I will set a period
To all thy labours; thou shalt be the master
Of my seraglio.

Face. Good, sir.

Mam. For I do mean
To have a list of wives and concubines
Equal with Solomon, who had the stone
Alike with me; and I will make me a back
With the elixir, tough as Hercules.

Thou art sure thou saw'st it blood?

Face. Both blood and spirit, sir.

Mam. I will have all my beds blown up, not stuff:

Down is too hard : and then, mine oval room
Fill'd with such pictures as Tiberius took
From Elephantis, and dull Aretine
But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses
Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse
And multiply the figures, as I walk
Naked between my succubæ. My mists
I'll have of perfume, vapoured 'bout the room,
To lose ourselves in ; and my baths, like pits
To fall into ; from whence we will come forth,
And roll us dry in gossamer and roses. —
Is it arrived at ruby ? — Where I spy
A wealthy citizen, or rich lawyer,
Have a sublimed pure wife, unto that fellow
I'll send a thousand pounds to make her mine.

Face. And I shall carry it?

Mam. No. I'll have no aids,
But fathers and mothers ; they will do it best,
Best of all others. And my flatterers
Shall be the pure and gravest of divines
That I can get for money. My mere fools,
Eloquent burgesses ; and then my poets,
The same that writ so subtly of foul wind,
Whom I will entertain still for that subject.
The few that would give out themselves to be
Court and town rakes, and everywhere belie
Ladies who are known most innocent for them,
Those will I beg to make me eunuchs of ;
And they shall fan me with ten ostrich tails
Apiece, made in a plume to gather wind.
We will be brave, Puff, now we have the med'cine.
My meat shall all come in in Indian shells,
Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths and rubies.
The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels,
Boiled in the spirit of Sol and dissolv'd pearl,
Apicius' diet, 'gainst the epilepsy :
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
Headed with diamond and carbuncle.
My foot-boy shall eat pheasants, calvered salmons,
Knots, godwits, lampreys : I myself will have
The beards of barbels served instead of salads ;
Oiled mushrooms, and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Drest with an exquisite and poignant sauce ;

For which I'll say unto my cook, "There's gold :
Go forth and be a knight."

Face. Sir, I'll go look
A little how it heightens.

[Exit]

Mam. Do. — My shirts
I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light
As cobwebs ; and for all my other raiment,
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of paradise and eastern air —

Sur. And do you think to have the stone with this?

Mam. No, I do think t' have all this with the stone.

Sur. Why, I have heard he must be *homo frugi*,
A pious, holy, and religious man,
One free from mortal sin, a very virgin.

Mam. That makes it, sir ; he is so : but I buy it ;
My venture brings it me. He, honest wretch,
A notable, superstitious, good soul,
Has worn his knees bare and his slippers bald
With prayer and fasting for it : and, sir, let him
Do it alone, for me, still. Here he comes.
Not a profane word afore him : 'tis poison. —

Enter SUBTLE.

Good-morrow, father.

Sub. Gentle son, good-morrow.
And to your friend there. What is he, is with you?

Mam. An heretic, that I did bring along,
I hope, sir, to convert him.

Sub. Son, I doubt
You are covetous, that thus you meet your time
In the just point : prevent your day at morning.
This argues something worthy of a fear
Of importune and carnal appetite.
Take heed you do not cause the blessing leave you,
With your ungovern'd haste. I should be sorry
To see my labours, not even at perfection,
Got by long watching and large patience,
Not prosper where my love and zeal hath placed them.
Which (heaven I call to witness, with yourself,
To whom I have poured my thoughts) in all my ends
Have look'd no way but unto public good,
To pious uses, and dear charity,
Now grown a prodigy with men. Wherein
If you, my son, should now prevaricate,

And to your own particular lusts employ
So great and catholic a bliss, be sure
A curse will follow, yea, and overtake
Your subtle and most secret ways.

Mam. I know, sir;
You shall not need to fear me: I but come
To have you confute this gentleman.

Sur. Who is,
Indeed, sir, somewhat costive of belief
Toward your stone; would not be gulled.

Sub. Well, son,
All that I can convince him in is this,
The WORK IS DONE, bright Sol is in his robe.
We have a medicine of the triple soul,
The glorified spirit. Thanks be to heaven,
And make us worthy of it! — Ulen Spiegel!

Face. [*Within.*] Anon, sir.

Sub. Look well to the register.
And let your heat still lessen by degrees,
To the aludels.

Face. [*Within.*] Yes, sir.

Sub. Did you look
O' the bolt's head yet?

Face. [*Within.*] Which? On D, sir?

Sub. Ay;
What's the complexion?

Face. [*Within.*] Whitish.

Sub. Infuse vinegar,
To draw his volatile substance and his tincture:
And let the water in glass E be filter'd
And put into the gripe's egg. Lute him well,
And leave him closed in balneo.

Face. [*Within.*] I will, sir.

Sur. What a brave language here is! Next to canting.

Sub. I have another work, you never saw, son,
That three days since passed the philosopher's wheel
In the lent heat of Athanor and 's become
Sulphur of Nature.

Mam. But 'tis for me?

Sub. What need you?
You have enough in that is perfect.

Mam. Oh, but ——

Sub. Why, this is covetise!

Mam. No, I assure you,
I shall employ it all in pious uses,

Founding of colleges and grammar schools,
Marrying young virgins, building hospitals,
And now and then a church.

Re-enter FACE.

Sub. How now !

Face. Sir, please you,
Shall I not change the filter ?

Sub. Marry, yes ;
And bring me the complexion of glass B.

[*Exit FACE.*

Mam. Have you another ?

Sub. Yes, son ; were I assured
Your piety were firm, we would not want
The means to glorify it ; but I hope the best. —
I mean to tinct C in sand-heat to-morrow,
And give him imbibition.

Mam. Of white oil ?

Sub. No, sir, of red. F is come over the helm too,
I thank my maker, in St. Mary's bath,
And shows *lac virginis*. Blessed be heaven !
I sent you of his fæces there calcined :
Out of that calx I have won the salt of mercury.

Mam. By pouring on your rectified water ?

Sub. Yes, and reveberating in Athanor.

Re-enter FACE.

How now ! what colour says it ?

Face. 'Tis ground black, sir.

Mam. That's your crow's head ?

Sur. Your cock's comb's, is it not ?

Sub. No, 'tis not perfect. Would it were the crow !
That work wants something.

Sur. Oh, I looked for this.
The hay's a pitching.

Sub. Are you sure you loosed them
In their own menstroe ?

Face. Yes, sir, and then married them,
And put them in a bolt's-head nipp'd to digestion,
According as you bade me when I set
The liquor of Mars to circulation
In the same heat.

Sub. The process then was right.

Face. Yes, by the token, sir, the retort brake,
And what was saved was put into the pelican,
And signed with Hermes' seal.

Sub. I think 'twas so.

We should have a new amalgama.

Sur. Oh, this ferret

Is rank as any pole-cat.

[*Aside.*

Sub. But I care not :

Let him e'en die ; we have enough beside,

In embrion. H has his white shirt on.

Face. Yes, sir,

He's ripe for inceration, he stands warm

In his ash fire. I would not you should let

Any die now, if I might counsel, sir,

For luck's sake to the rest : it is not good.

Mam. He says right.

Sur. Ay, are you bolted ?

[*Aside.*

Face. Nay, I know't, sir,

I have seen the ill fortune. What is some three ounces
Of fresh materials ?

Mam. Is't no more ?

Face. No more, sir,

Of gold, t' amalgame with some six of mercury.

Mam. Away, here's money. What will serve ?

Face. Ask him, sir.

Mam. How much ?

Sub. Give him nine pounds — you may give him ten.

Sur. Yes, twenty, and be cozen'd — do.

Mam. There 'tis.

[*Gives FACE the money.*

Sub. This needs not ; but that you will have it so,

To see conclusions of all ; for two

Of our inferior works are at fixation,

A third is in ascension. Go your ways.

Have you set the oil of luna in kemia ?

Face. Yes, sir.

Sub. And the philosopher's vinegar ?

Face. Ay.

[*Exit.*

Sur. We shall have a salad !

Mam. When do you make projection ?

Sub. Son, be not hasty, I exalt our med'cine,

By hanging him in *balneo vaporoso*,

And giving him solution ; then congeal him ;

And then dissolve him ; then again congeal him.

For look, how oft I iterate the work

So many times I add unto his virtue.

As, if at first one ounce convert a hundred,

After his second loose, he'll turn a thousand ;

His third solution, ten ; his fourth, a hundred ;

After his fifth, a thousand thousand ounces
Of any imperfect metal, into pure
Silver or gold, in all examinations,
As good as any of the natural mine.
Get you your stuff here against afternoon,
Your brass, your pewter, and your andirons.

Mam. Not those of iron?

Sub. Yes, you may bring them too :
We'll change all metals.

Sur. I believe you in that.

Mam. Then I may send my spits?

Sub. Yes, and your racks.

Sur. And dripping pans, and pot-hangers, and hooks,
Shall he not?

Sub. If he please.

Sur. — To be an ass.

Sub. How, sir !

Mam. This gentleman you must bear withal :
I told you he had no faith.

Sur. And little hope, sir ;
But much less charity, should I gull myself.

Sub. Why, what have you observed, sir, in our art,
Seems so impossible?

Sur. But your whole work, no more.
That you should hatch gold in a furnace, sir,
As they do eggs in Egypt !

Sub. Sir, do you
Believe that eggs are hatched so?

Sur. If I should?

Sub. Why, I think that the greater miracle.
No eggs but differ from a chicken more
Than metals in themselves.

Sur. That can not be.
The egg's ordained by nature to that end,
And is a chicken *in potentia*.

Sub. The same we say of lead and other metals,
Which would be gold if they had time.

Mam. And that
Our art doth further.

Sub. Ay, for 'twere absurd
To think that nature in the earth bred gold
Perfect in the instant ; something went before.
There must be remote matter.

Sur. Ay, what is that?

Sub. Marry, we say —

Mam. Ay, now it heats : stand, father,
Pound him to dust.

Sub. It is, of the one part,
A humid exhalation, which we call
Materia liquida, or the unctuous water ;
On the other part, a certain crass and vicious
Portion of earth ; both which, concreate,
Do make the elementary matter of gold ;
Which is not yet *propria materia*,
But common to all metals and all stones ;
For, where it is forsaken of that moisture,
And hath more dryness, it becomes a stone ;
Where it retains more of the humid fatness,
It turns to sulphur or to quicksilver,
Who are the parents of all other metals.
Nor can this remote matter suddenly
Progress so from extreme unto extreme,
As to grow gold, and leap o'er all the means.
Nature doth first beget the imperfect, then
Proceeds she to the perfect. Of that airy
And oily water, mercury is engendered ;
Sulphur of the fat and earthy part ; the one,
Which is the last, supplying the place of male,
The other of the female, in all metals.
Some do believe hermaphrodeity,
That both do act and suffer. But these two
Make the rest ductile, malleable, extensive.
And even in gold they are ; for we do find
Seeds of them, by our fire, and gold in them ;
And can produce the species of each metal
More perfect thence, than Nature doth in earth.
Beside, who doth not see in daily practice
Art can beget bees, hornets, beetles, wasps,
Out of the carcasses and dung of creatures ;
Yea, scorpions of an herb, being rightly placed ?
And these are living creatures, far more perfect
And excellent than metals.

Mam. Well said, father !
Nay, if he take you in hand, sir, with an argument,
He'll bray you in a mortar.

Sur. Pray you, sir, stay.
Rather than I'll be bray'd, sir, I'll believe
That Alchemy is a pretty kind of game,
Somewhat like tricks o' the cards, to cheat a man
With charming.

Sub. Sir?

Sur. What else are all your terms,
Whereon no one of your writers 'grees with other?
Of your elixir, your *lac virginis*,
Your stone, your med'cine, and your chrysosperme,
Your sal, your sulphur, and your mercury,
Your oil of height, your tree of life, your blood,
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,
Your toad, your crow, your dragon, and your panther;
Your sun, your moon, your firmament, your adrop,
Your lato, azoch, zernich, chibrit, heautarit,
And then your red man and your white woman,
With all your broths, your menstrues, and materials,
Of lye and egg-shells, women's terms, man's blood,
Hair o' the head, burnt clouts, chalk, merds, and clay,
Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,
And worlds of other strange ingredients,
Would burst a man to name?

Sub. And all these named,
Intending but one thing; which art our writers
Used to obscure their art.

Mam. Sir, so I told him —
Because the simple idiot should not learn it,
And make it vulgar.

Sub. Was not all the knowledge
Of the Egyptians writ in mystic symbols?
Speak not the Scriptures oft in parables?
Are not the choicest fables of the poets,
That were the fountains and first springs of wisdom,
Wrapp'd in perplexed allegories?

Mam. I urged that,
And cleared to him that Sysiphus was damned
To roll the ceaseless stone, only because
He would have made Ours common. [*DOL appears at the door.*
Who is this?

Sub. 'Sprecious! — What do you mean? Go in, good lady,
Let me entreat you. [*DOL. retires.*] Where's this varlet?

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Sir.

Sub. You very knave! do you use me thus?

Face. Wherein, sir?

Sub. Go in and see, you traitor. Go!

[*Exit FACE.*

Mam. Who is, sir?

Sub. Nothing, sir; nothing.

Mam. What's the matter, good sir?
I have not seen you thus distemper'd : who is 't?

Sub. All arts have still had, sir, their adversaries,
But ours the most ignorant.

Re-enter FACE.

What now?

Face. 'Twas not my fault, sir : she would speak with you,
Sub. Would she, sir ! Follow me. [Exit.

Mam. [*Stopping him*] Stay, Lungs.

Face. I dare not, sir.

Mam. Stay, man ; what is she?

Face. A lord's sister, sir.

Mam. How ! pray thee, stay.

Face. She's mad, sir, and sent hither —
He'll be mad too —

Mam. I warrant thee.

Why sent hither?

Face. Sir, to be cured.

Sub. [*Within*] Why, rascal !

Face. Lo you ! — Here, sir ! [Exit.

Mam. 'Fore God, a Bradamante, a brave piece.

Sur. Heart, this is an evil house ! I will be burnt else.

Mam. Oh, by this light, no ; do not wrong him. He's
Too scrupulous that way : it is his vice.
No, he's a rare physician, do him right,
An excellent Paracelsian, and has done
Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
With spirits, he ; he will not hear a word
Of Galen or his tedious recipes.

Re-enter FACE.

How now, Lungs !

Face. Softly, sir ; speak softly. I meant
To have told your worship all. This must not hear.

Mam. No, he will not be "gull'd" ; let him alone.

Face. You are very right, sir ; she is a most rare scholar,
And is gone mad with studying Broughton's works.
If you but name a word touching the Hebrew
She falls into her fit, and will discourse
So learnedly of genealogies,
As you would run mad, too, to hear her, sir.

Mam. How might one do t' have conference with her, Lungs?

Face. Oh, divers have run mad upon the conference :
I do not know, sir. I am sent in haste
To fetch a vial,

Sur. Be not gull'd, Sir Mammon.

Mam. Wherein? Pray ye, be patient.

Sur. Yes, as you are,

And trust confederate knaves and sharks and bawds.

Mam. You are too foul, believe it. — Come here, Ulen,
One word.

Face. I dare not, in good faith.

[*Going.*

Mam. Stay, knave.

Face. He is extreme angry that you saw her, sir.

Mam. Drink that [*Gives him money*]. What is she when
she's out of her fit?

Face. Oh, the most affablest creature, sir! So merry!

So pleasant! She'll mount you up like quicksilver

Over the helm, and circulate like oil,

A very vegetal; discourse of state,

Of mathematics, frolic, anything —

Mam. Is she no way accessible? no means,
No trick to give a man a taste of her — wit —
Or so?

Sub. [*Within*] Ulen!

Face. I'll come to you again, sir,

[*Exit.*

Mam. Surly, I did not think one of your breeding
Would traduce personages of worth.

Sur. Sir Epicure,

Your friend to use; yet still loth to be gull'd:

I do not like your philosophical bawds.

Their stone is lechery enough to pay for

Without this bait.

Mam. 'Heart, you abuse yourself.

I know the lady, and her friends, and means,

The original of this disaster. Her brother

Has told me all.

Sur. And yet you never saw her
Till now!

Mam. Oh yes, but I forgot. I have, believe it,
One of the treacherousest memories, I do think,
Of all mankind.

Sur. What call you her brother?

Mam. My Lord —

He will not have his name known, now I think on it.

Sur. A very treacherous memory!

Mam. On my faith —

Sur. Tut, if you have it not about you, pass it
Till we meet next.

Mam. Nay, by this hand, 'tis true,

He's one I honour, and my noble friend ;
And I respect his house.

Sur. 'Heart ! can it be
That a grave sir, a rich, that has no need,
A wise sir, too, at other times, should thus,
With his own oaths and arguments, make hard means
To gull himself? An this be your elixir,
Your *lapis mineralis* and your lunary,
Give me your honest trick yet at primero,
Or gleeke : and take your *lutum sapientis*,
Your *menstruum simplex* ! I'll have gold before you,
And with less danger of the quicksilver
Or the hot sulphur.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Here's one from Captain Face, sir [*to SURLY*]
Desires you to meet him in the Temple Church,
Some half-hour hence, and upon earnest business.
Sir — [*whispers MAMMON*] — if you please to quit us now, and
come

Again within two hours, you shall have
My master busy examining o' the works ;
And I will steal you in unto the party,
That you may see her converse. Sir, shall I say
You'll meet the captain's worship?

Sur. Sir, I will.

[*Walks aside.*]

But, by attorney and to a second purpose,
Now, I am sure I understand this house ;
I'll swear it, were the marshal here to thank me :
The naming this commander doth confirm it.
Don Face ! why he's the most authentic dealer
In these commodities, the superintendent
To all the quainter traffickers in town !
He is the visitor, and does appoint
Who visits whom, and at what hour ; what price ;
Which gown, and in what smock ; what fall ; what tire.
Him will I prove, by a third person, to find
The subtleties of this dark labyrinth :
Which if I do discover, dear Sir Mammon,
You'll give your poor friend leave, though no philosopher,
To laugh : for you that are, 'tis thought, shall weep.

Face. Sir, he does pray you'll not forget.

Sur. I will not, sir.

Sir Epicure, I shall leave you.

[*Exit.*]

Mam. I follow you straight.

Face. But do so, good sir, to avoid suspicion.
This gentleman has a parlous head.

Mam. But wilt thou, Ulen,
Be constant to thy promise?

Face. As my life, sir.

Mam. And wilt thou insinuate what I am, and praise me,
And say I am a noble fellow?

Face. Oh, what else, sir?
And that you'll make her royal with the stone,
An empress : and yourself, King of Bantam.

Mam. Wilt thou do this?

Face. Will I, sir !

Mam. Lungs, my Lungs !
I love thee.

Face. Send your stuff, sir, that my master
May busy himself about projection.

Mam. Thou hast witch'd me, rogue : take, go.

[*Gives him money.*]

Face. Your jack, and all, sir.

Mam. Thou art a villain — I will send my jack,
And the weights too. Slave, I could bite thine ear.
Away, thou dost not care for me.

Face. Not I, sir !

Mam. Come, I was born to make thee, my good weasel,
Set thee on a bench, and have thee twirl a chain
With the best lord's vermin of 'em all.

Face. Away, sir.

Mam. A count, nay, a count palatine —

Face. Good, sir, go.

Mam. Shall not advance thee better : no, nor faster. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter SUBTLE and DOL.

Sub. Has he bit? has he bit?

Face. And swallowed too, my Subtle.
I have given him line, and now he plays, i' faith.

Sub. And shall we twitch him?

Face. Thorough both the gills.
For here is a rare bait, with which a man
No sooner's taken, but he straight runs mad.

Sub. Dol, my Lord What's'hums sister, you must now
Bear yourself stately.

Dol. Oh, let me alone.
I'll not forget my race, I warrant you.
I'll keep my distance, laugh and talk aloud ;

Have all the tricks of a proud scurvy lady,
And be as rude as her woman.

Face. Well said, sanguine !

Sub. But will he send his andirons ?

Face. His jack too,

And 's iron shoeing-horn ; I have spoke to him. Well,
I must not lose my wary gamester yonder.

Sub. Oh, Monsieur Caution, that will not be gulled.

Face. Ay,

If I can strike a fine hook into him, now !

The Temple Church, there I have cast mine angle.

Well, pray for me. I'll about it. [*Knocking without.*]

Sub. What, more gudgeons !

Dol, scout, scout ! [*DOL goes to the window.*] Stay, Face, you
must go to the door.

Pray God it be my anabaptist. — Who is 't, Dol ?

Dol. I know him not : he looks like a gold-endman.

Sub. Ods so ! 'tis he, he said he would send — what call you
him ?

The sanctified elder, that should deal

For Mammon's jack and andirons. Let him in.

Stay, help me off, first, with my gown. [*Exit FACE with the
gown.*] Away,

Madam, to your withdrawing chamber. [*Exit DOL.*] Now,

In a new tune, new gesture, but old language. —

This fellow is sent from one negotiates with me

About the stone too ; for the holy brethren

Of Amsterdam, the exiled saints ; that hope

To raise their discipline by it. I must use him

In some strange fashion, now, to make him admire me. —

Enter ANANIAS.

Where is my drudge ?

[*Aloud.*]

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Sir !

Sub. Take away the recipient,
And rectify your menstroe from the phlegma.

Then pour it on the Sol, in the cucurbite,

And let them macerate together.

Face. Yes, sir.

And save the ground ?

Sub. No : *terra damnata*

Must not have entrance in the work. — Who are you ?

Ana. A faithful brother, if it please you.

Sub. What's that?

A Lullianist? a Ripley? *Filius artis?*

Can you sublime and dulcify? calcine?

Know you the sapor pontic? sapor stiptic?

Or what is homogene, or heterogene?

Ana. I understand no heathen language truly.

Sub. Heathen? you Knipper-doling! is *Ars sacra*
Or chrysopœia, or spagyrica,
Or the pamphysic, or panarchic knowledge,
A heathen language?

Ana. Heathen Greek, I take it.

Sub. How heathen Greek?

Ana. All's heathen but the Hebrew.

Sub. Sirrah, my varlet, stand you forth and speak to him
Like a philosopher: answer in the language,
Name the vexations, and the martyrizations
Of metals in the work.

Face. Sir, putrefaction,
Solution, ablution, sublimation,
Cohobation, calcination, ceration, and
Fixation.

Sub. This is heathen Greek to you, now! —
And when comes vivification?

Face. After mortification.

Sub. What's cohobation?

Face. 'Tis the pouring on
Your aqua regis, and then drawing him off,
To the trine circle of the seven spheres.

Sub. What's the proper passion of metals?

Face. Malleation.

Sub. What's your *ultimum supplicium auri*?

Face. Antimonium.

Sub. This is heathen Greek to you? — And what's your
mercury?

Face. A very fugitive, he will be gone, sir.

Sub. How know you him?

Face. By his viscosity,
His oleosity, and his suscitability.

Sub. How do you sublime him?

Face. With the calce of egg-shells,
White marble, talc.

Sub. Your magisterium, now,
What's that?

Face. Shifting, sir, your elements,
Dry into cold, cold into moist, moist into hot,
Hot into dry.

Sub. This is heathen Greek to you still !
Your *lapis philosophicus* ?

Face. 'Tis a stone,
And not a stone ; a spirit, a soul, and a body :
Which if you do dissolve, it is dissolved ;
If you coagulate, it is coagulated ;
If you make it to fly, it flieth.

Sub. Enough. [Exit FACE.]

This is heathen Greek to you ! What are you, sir ?

Ana. Please you, a servant of the exiled brethren
That deal with widows' and with orphans' goods,
And make a just account unto the saints :
A deacon.

Sub. Oh, you are sent from Master Wholesome,
Your teacher ?

Ana. From Tribulation Wholesome,
Our very zealous pastor.

Sub. Good ! I have
Some orphans' goods to come here.

Ana. Of what kind, sir.

Sub. Pewter and brass, andirons and kitchenware,
Metals, that we must use our medicine on :
Wherein the brethren may have a penn'orth
For ready money.

Ana. Were the orphans' parents
Sincere professors ?

Sub. Why do you ask ?

Ana. Because
We then are to deal justly, and give in truth
Their utmost value.

Sub. 'Slid, you'd cozen else,
And if their parents were not of the faithful ! —
I will not trust you, now I think on it,
Till I have talked with your pastor. Have you brought money
To buy more coals ?

Ana. No, surely.

Sub. No, how so ?

Ana. The brethren bid me say unto you, sir,
Surely they will not venture any more
Till they may see projection.

Sub. How !

Ana. You have had,
For the instruments, as bricks, and loam and glasses,
Already thirty pounds ; and for materials,
They say, some ninety more : and they have heard since

That one at Heidelberg made it of an egg
And a small paper of pin-dust.

Sub. What's your name?

Ana. My name is Ananias.

Sub. Out, the varlet

That cozen'd the apostles ! Hence, away,
Flee, mischief ! Had your holy consistory
No name to send me of another sound
Than wicked Ananias ? send your elders
Hither to make atonement for you quickly,
And give me satisfaction ; or out goes
The fire ; and down th' alembics, and the furnace,
Piger Henricus, or what not. Thou wretch !
Both sericon and bufo shall be lost,
Tell them. All hope of rooting out the bishops,
Or the antichristian hierarchy, shall perish,
If they stay threescore minutes : the aqueity,
Terreity, and sulphureity
Shall run together again, and all be annulled,
Thou wicked Ananias ! [*Exit ANANIAS.*] This will fetch 'em,
And make them haste towards their gulling more.
A man must deal like a rough nurse, and fright
Those that are froward to an appetite.

Re-enter FACE in his uniform, followed by DRUGGER.

Face. He is busy with his spirits, but we'll upon him.

Sub. How now ! what mates, what Bayards have we here ?

Face. I told you he would be furious. — Sir, here's Nab
Has brought you another piece of gold to look on
— We must appease him. Give it me — and prays you,
You would devise — what is it, Nab ?

Drug. A sign, sir.

Face. Ay, a good lucky one, a thriving sign, doctor ?

Sub. I was devising now.

Face. 'Slight, do not say so,
He will repent he gave you any more —
What say you to his constellation, doctor ?
The Balance ?

Sub. No, that way is stale and common.
A townsman born in Taurus gives the bull,
Or the bull's-head ; in Aries, the ram,
A poor device ! No, I will have his name
Formed in some mystic character ; whose radii,
Striking the senses of the passers-by,
Shall, by a virtual influence, breed affections

That may result upon the party owns it :

As thus ——

Face. Nab !

Sub. He shall have "a bel," that's "Abel" ;
And by it standing one whose name is "Dee,"
In a "rug" gown, there's "D, Rug," that's "drug" ;
And right anenst him a dog snarling "er" ;
There's "Drugger," Abel Drugger. That's his sign.
And here's now mystery and hieroglyphic !

Face. Abel, thou art made.

Drug. Sir, I do thank his worship.

Face. Six o' thy legs more will not do it, Nab.
He has brought you a pipe of tobacco, doctor.

Drug. Yes, sir :

I have another thing I would impart ——

Face. Out with it, Nab.

Drug. Sir, there is lodged, hard by me,
A rich young widow ——

Face. Good ! a bona roba ?

Drug. But nineteen at the most.

Face. Very good, Abel.

Drug. Marry, she's not in fashion yet ; she wears
A hood, but it stands a cop.

Face. No matter, Abel.

Drug. And I do now and then give her a fucus ——

Face. What ! dost thou deal, Nab ?

Sub. I did tell you, captain.

Drug. And physic, too, sometime, sir ; for which she trusts
me

With all her mind. She's come up here of purpose
To learn the fashion.

Face. Good (his match too !) — On, Nab.

Drug. And she does strangely long to know her fortune.

Face. Ods lid, Nab, send her to the doctor, hither.

Drug. Yes I have spoke to her of his worship already ;
But she's afraid it will be blown abroad,
And hurt her marriage.

Face. Hurt it ! 'tis the way
To heal it, if 'twere hurt ; to make it more
Followed and sought ; Nab, thou shalt tell her this.
She'll be more known, more talked of ; and your widows
Are ne'er of any price till they be famous :
Their honour is their multitude of suitors :
Send her, it may be thy good fortune. What,
Thou dost not know.

Drug. No, sir; she'll never marry
Under a knight: her brother has made a vow.

Face. What! and dost thou despair, my little Nab,
Knowing what the doctor has set down for thee,
And seeing so many of the city dubbed?
One glass o' thy water, with a madam I know,
Will have it done, Nab; what's her brother—a knight?

Drug. No, sir, a gentleman newly warm in his land, sir,
Scarce cold in his one-and-twenty, that does govern
His sister here; and is a man himself
Of some three thousand a year, and is come up
To learn to quarrel, and to live by his wits,
And will go down again, and die in the country.

Face. How! to quarrel?

Drug. Yes, sir, to carry quarrels,
As gallants do; to manage them by line.

Face. 'Slid, Nab, the doctor is the only man
In Christendom for him. He has made a table,
With mathematical demonstrations,
Touching the art of quarrels: he will give him
An instrument to quarrel by. Go, bring them both,
Him and his sister. And, for thee, with her
The doctor haply may persuade. Go to:
Shalt give his worship a new damask suit
Upon the premises.

Sub. Oh, good captain!

Face. He shall;
He is the honestest fellow, doctor. — Stay not,
No offers; bring the damask, and the parties.

Drug. I'll try my power, sir.

Face. And thy will, too, Nab.

Sub. 'Tis good tobacco, this! What is't an ounce?

Face. He'll send you a pound, doctor.

Sub. Oh, no.

Face. He will do't.

It is the goodest soul Abel! — Abel, about it.
Thou shalt know more anon. Away, begone. — [*Exit ABEL.*
A miserable rogue, and lives with cheese,
And has the worms. That was the cause, indeed,
Why he came now: he dealt with me in private,
To get a med'cine for them.

Sub. And shall, sir. This works.

Face. A wife, a wife for one of us, my dear Subtle!
We'll e'en draw lots,

Sub. Faith, best let's see her first, and then determine.

Face. Content : but Dol must have no breath on 't.

Sub. Mum.

Away you, to your Surly yonder, catch him.

Face. Pray God, I have not stayed too long.

Sub. I fear it.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—THE LANE BEFORE LOVEWITT'S HOUSE

Enter TRIBULATION WHOLESOME *and* ANANIAS.

TRI. These chastisements are common to the saints,
And such rebukes, we of the separation
Must bear with willing shoulders, as the trials
Sent forth to tempt our frailties.

Ana. In pure zeal,

I do not like the man, he is a heathen,
And speaks the language of Canaan, truly.

Tri. I think him a profane person indeed.

Ana. He bears

The visible mark of the beast in his forehead.
And for his stone, it is a work of darkness,
And with philosophy blinds the eyes of man.

Tri. Good brother, we must bend unto all means
That may give furtherance to the holy cause.

Ana. Which his cannot : the sanctified cause
Should have a sanctified course.

Tri. Not always necessary :

The children of perdition are oft-times
Made instruments even of the greatest works :
Beside, we should give somewhat to man's nature,
The place he lives in, still about the fire,
And fume of metals, that intoxicate
The brain of man, and made him prone to passion.
Where have you greater atheists than your cooks?
Or more profane, or choleric, than your glass-men?
More antichristian than your bell-founders?
What makes the devil so devilish, I would ask you,
Satan, our common enemy, but his being
Perpetually about the fire, and boiling
Brimstone and arsenic? We must give, I say,
Unto the motives, and the stirrers-up

Of humours in the blood. It may be so,
 Whenas the work is done, the stone is made,
 This heat of his may turn into a zeal,
 And stand up for the beauteous discipline,
 Against the filthy cloth and rag of Rome.
 We must await his calling, and the coming
 Of the good spirit. You did fault t' upbraid him
 With the brethren's blessing of Heidelberg, weighing
 What need we have to hasten on the work
 For the restoring of the silenced saints,
 Which n'er will be, but by the philosopher's stone.
 And so a learned elder, one of Scotland,
 Assured me; *aurum potabile* being
 The only med'cine for the civil magistrate
 T' incline him to a feeling of the cause,
 And must be daily used in the disease.

Ana. I have not edified more, truly, by man;
 Not since the beautiful light first shone on me:
 And I am sad my zeal hath so offended.

Tri. Let us call on him then.

Ana. The motion's good,
 And of the spirit; I will knock first. [*Knocks.*] Peace within!
 [*The door is opened, and they enter.*]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN LOVEWIT'S HOUSE

Enter SUTLE, followed by TRIBULATION and ANANIAS.

Sub. Oh, are you come? 'Twas time. Your threescore minutes
 Were at last thread, you see; and down had gone
Furnus acedia, turris circulatorius:
 Lembec, bolt's head, retort and pelican
 Had all been cinders.—Wicked Ananias!
 Art thou returned? Nay, then, it goes down yet.

Tri. Sir, be appeased; he is come to humble
 Himself in spirit, and to ask your patience,
 If too much zeal hath carried him aside
 From the due path.

Sub. Why, this doth qualify!

Tri. The brethren had no purpose, verily,
 To give you the least grievance: but are ready
 To lend their helping hands to any project
 The spirit and you direct.

Sub. This qualifies more!

Tri. And for the orphan's goods, let them be valued,
 Or what is needful else to the holy work,

It shall be numbered : here, by me, the saints
Throw down their purse before you.

Sub. This qualifies most !

Why, thus it should be, now you understand.
Have I discoursed so unto you of our stone,
And of the good that it shall bring your cause?
Showed you (beside the main of hiring forces
Abroad, drawing the Hollanders, your friends,
From the Indies, to serve you with all their fleet)
That even the med'cinal use shall make you a faction
And party in the realm? As, put the case,
That some great man in state, he have the gout,
Why, you but send three drops of your elixir,
You help him straight : there you have made a friend.
Another has the palsy or the dropsy,
He takes of your incombustible stuff,
He's young again : there you have made a friend.
A lady that is past the feat of body,
Though not of mind, and hath her face decayed
Beyond all cure of paintings, you restore
With the oil of talc : there you have made a friend,
And all her friends. A lord that is a leper,
A knight that has the bone-ache, or a squire
That hath both these, you make them smooth and sound
With a bare fricace of your med'cine : still
You increase your friends.

Tri. Ay, it is very pregnant.

Sub. And then the turning of this lawyer's pewter
to plate at Christmas —

Ana. Christ-tide, I pray you.

Sub. Yes, Ananias !

Ana. I have done.

Sub. Or changing

His parcel gilt to massy gold. You can not
But raise your friends. Withal to be of power
To pay an army in the field, to buy
The king of France out of his realms, or Spain
Out of his Indies. What can you not do
Against lords spiritual or temporal,
That shall oppone you?

Tri. Verily, 'tis true.

We may be temporal lords ourselves, I take it.

Sub. You may be anything, and leave off to make
Long-winded exercises ; or suck up
Your "ha !" and "hum !" in a tune. I not deny

But such as are not graced in a state,
May, for their ends, be averse in religion,
And get a tune to call the flock together :
For, to say sooth, a tune does much with women
And other phlegmatic people ; it is your bell.

Ana. Bells are profane ; a tune may be religious.

Sub. No warning with you ! then farewell my patience.
'Slight, it shall down : I will not be thus tortured.

Tri. I pray you, sir.

Sub. All shall perish. I have spoke it.

Tri. Let me find grace, sir, in your eyes : the man
He stands corrected : neither did his zeal,
But as yourself, allow a tune somewhere.
Which now, being tow'rd the stone, we shall not need.

Sub. No, nor your holy vizard, to win widows
To give you legacies ; or make zealous wives
To rob their husbands for the common cause :
Nor take the start of bonds broke but one day,
And say they were forfeited by providence.
Nor shall you need o'ernight to eat huge meals,
To celebrate your next day's fast the better ;
The whilst the brethren and the sisters humbled,
Abate the stiffness of the flesh. Nor cast
Before your hungry hearers scrupulous bones ;
As whether a Christian may hawk or hunt,
Or whether matrons of the holy assembly
May lay their hair out, or wear doublets,
Or have that idol starch about their linen.

Ana. It is indeed an idol.

Tri. Mind him not, sir.

I do command thee, spirit of zeal, but trouble,
To peace with him ! Pray you, sir, go on.

Sub. Nor shall you need to libel 'gainst the prelates,
And shorten so your ears against the hearing
Of the next wire-drawn grace. Nor of necessity
Rail against plays, to please the alderman
Whose daily custard you devour : nor lie
With zealous rage till you are hoarse. Not one
Of these so singular arts. Nor call yourselves
By names of Tribulation, Persecution,
Restraint, Long-patience, and such like, affected
By the whole family or wood of you,
Only for glory, and to catch the ear
Of the disciple.

Tri. Truly, sir, they are

Ways that the godly brethren have invented
For propagation of the glorious cause,
As very notable means, and whereby also
Themselves grow soon, and profitably, famous.

Sub. Oh, but the stone, all's idle to it! Nothing!
The art of angels, nature's miracle,
The divine secret that doth fly in clouds
From east to west; and whose tradition
Is not from men, but spirits.

Ana. I hate traditions;
I do not trust them. —

Tri. Peace!

Ana. They are popish all.
I will not peace: I will not —

Tri. Ananias!

Ana. Please the profane, to grieve the godly; I may not.

Sub. Well, Ananias, thou shalt overcome.

Tri. It is an ignorant zeal that haunts him, sir,
But truly, else, a very faithful brother,
A botcher, and a man, by revelation,
That hath a competent knowledge of the truth.

Sub. Has he a competent sum there in the bag
To buy the goods within? I am made guardian,
And must, for charity, and conscience sake,
Now see the most be made for my poor orphan;
Though I desire the brethren too good gainers;
There they are within. When you have view'd, and bought 'em,
And ta'en the inventory of what they are,
They are ready for projection; there's no more
To do; cast on the med'cine so much silver
As there is tin there, so much gold as brass,
I'll give it you in, by weight.

Tri. But how long time,
Sir, must the saints expect yet?

Sub. Let me see.
How's the moon now? Eight, nine, ten days hence,
He will be silver potato; then three days
Before he citronise: some fifteen days,
The magisterium will be perfected.

Ana. About the second day of the third week,
In the ninth month?

Sub. Yes, my good Ananias.

Tri. What will the orphans' goods arise to, think you?

Sub. Some hundred marks, as much as filled three cars,
Unladed now: you'll make six millions of them.
But I must have more coals laid in,

Tri. How!

Sub. Another load,

And then we have finished. We must now increase
Our fire to *ignis ardens* we are past

Fimus equinus, balnei, cineris,

And all those lenter heats. If the holy purse
Should with this draught fall low, and that the saints
Do need a present sum, I have a trick

To melt the pewter, you shall buy now, instantly,
And with a tincture, make you as good Dutch dollars
As any are in Holland.

Tri. Can you so?

Sub. Ay, and shall 'bide the third examination.

Ana. It will be joyful tidings to the brethren.

Sub. But you must carry it secret.

Tri. Ay, but stay,

This act of coining, is it lawful?

Ana. Lawful!

We know no magistrate; or, if we did,
This is foreign coin.

Sub. It is no coining, sir,
It is but casting.

Tri. Ha! you distinguish well:
Casting of money may be lawful.

Ana. 'Tis, sir,

Tri. Truly, I take it so.

Sub. There is no scruple,
Sir, to be made of it; believe Ananias:
This case of conscience he is studied in.

Tri. I'll make a question of it to the brethren,

Ana. The brethren shall approve it lawful, doubt not.
Where shall it be done? *[Knocking without.]*

Sub. For that we'll talk anon.
There's some to speak with me. Go in, I pray you,
And view the parcels. That's the inventory.
I'll come to you straight. *[Exeunt TRIB. and ANA.]*

Who is it? — Face! appear.

Enter FACE in his uniform.

How now! Good prize?

Face. Good plague! Yond' costive cheater
Never came on.

Sub. How then?

Face. I have walked the round
Till now, and no such thing.

Sub. And have you quit him?

Face. Quit him! an hell would quit him too, he were happy.
'Slight! Would you have me stalk like a mill-jade,
All day, for one that will not yield us grains?
I know him of old.

Sub. Oh, but to have gulled him
Had been a mastery.

Face. Let him go, black boy!
And turn thee that some fresh news may possess thee.
A noble count, a don of Spain, my dear
Delicious compeer, and my party-bawd,
Who is come hither private for his conscience,
And brought munition with him, six great slops,
Bigger than three Dutch hoys, beside round trunks,
Furnished with pistolets, and pieces of eight,
Will straight be here, my rogue, to have thy bath
(That is the colour), and to make his battery
Upon our Dol, our castle, our cinque-port,
Our Dover pier, our what thou wilt. Where is she?
She must prepare perfumes, delicate linen,
The bath in chief, a banquet, and her wit.
Where is the doxy?

Sub. I'll send her to thee:
And but dispatch my brace of little John Leydens,
And come again myself.

Face. Are they within, then?

Sub. Numbering the sum.

Face. How much?

Sub. A hundred marks, boy.

[*Exit.*

Face. Why, this is a lucky day. Ten pounds of Mammon!
Three of my clerk! A portague of my grocer!
This of the brethren! beside reversions,
And states to come in the widow, and my count!
My share to-day will not be bought for forty——

Enter DOL.

Dol. What?

Face. Pounds, dainty Dorothy! Art thou so near?

Dol. Yes; say, lord general, how fares our camp?

Face. As with the few that had entrenched themselves
Safe, by their discipline, against a world, Dol,
And laughed within those trenches, and grew fat
With thinking on the booties, Dol, brought in
Daily by their small parties. This dear hour
A doughty don is taken with my Dol;

And thou may'st make his ransom what thou wilt,
 My Dousabel ; he shall be brought here fettered
 With thy fair looks, before he sees thee ; and thrown
 In a down-bed, as dark as any dungeon,
 Where thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum ;
 Thy drum, my Dol, thy drum ; till he be tame
 As the poor blackbirds were in the great frost,
 Or bees are with a bason ; and so hive him
 In the swan-skin coverlid and cambric sheets,
 Till he work honey and wax, my little God's-gift.

Dol. What is he, general?

Face. An adalantado,

A grandee, girl. Was not my Dapper here yet?

Dol. No.

Face. Nor my Drugger?

Dol. Neither.

Face. A plague on 'em,
 They are so long a-furnishing ! Such stinkards
 Would not be seen upon these festival days. —

Re-enter SUBTLE.

How now ! have you done ?

Sub. Done. They are gone : the sum
 Is here in bank, my Face. I would we knew
 Another chapman now would buy 'em outright.

Face. 'Slid, Nab shall do 't against he have the widow
 To furnish household.

Sub. Excellent, well thought on :
 Pray God he come !

Face. I pray he keep away
 Till our new business be o'erpast.

Sub. But, Face,
 How cam'st thou by this secret don ?

Face. A spirit
 Brought me th' intelligence in a paper here,
 As I was conjuring yonder in my circle
 For Surly ; I have my flies abroad. Your bath
 Is famous, Subtle, by my means. Sweet Dol,
 Tickle him with thy mother-tongue. His great
 Verdugoship has not a jot of language ;
 So much the easier to be cozened, my Dolly.
 He will come here in a hired coach, obscure,
 And our own coachman, whom I have sent as guide,
 No creature else. [*Knocking without.*] Who's that?

[*Exit* DOL.]

Sub. It is not he?

Face. On no, not yet this hour.

Re-enter DOL.

Sub. Who is't?

Dol. Dapper,

Your clerk.

Face. God's will then, Queen of Fairy,
On with your tire ; — [*Exit DOL*] — and doctor, with your robes.
Let's dispatch him, for God's sake.

Sub. 'Twill be long.

Face. I warrant you, take but the cue I give you,
It shall be brief enough. — [*Goes to the window.*] — 'Slight, here
are more !

Abel, and I think the angry boy, the heir,
That fain would quarrel.

Sub. And the widow?

Face. No.

Not that I see. Away !

[*Exit SUB.*]

Enter DAPPER.

Oh, sir, you are welcome.

The doctor is within a-moving for you ;
I have the most ado to win him to it !
He swears you'll be the darling of the dice :
He never heard her highness dote till now,
Your aunt has given you the most gracious words
That can be thought on.

Dap. Shall I see her grace?

Face. See her, and kiss her too. —

Enter ABEL, followed by KASTRIL.

What, honest Nab !

Hast brought the damask ?

Drug. No, sir ; here's tobacco.

Face. 'Tis well done, Nab : thou'lt bring the damask too?

Drug. Yes : here's the gentleman, captain, Master Kastril,
I have brought to see the doctor.

Face. Where's the widow?

Drug. Sir, as he likes, his sister, he says, shall come.

Face. Oh, is it so? Good time. Is your name Kastril, sir?

Kas. Ay, and the best of the Kastrils, I'd be sorry else,
By fifteen hundred a-year. Where is the doctor?
My mad tobacco-boy, here, tells me of one
That can do things : has he any skill?

Face. Wherein, sir?

Kas. To carry a business, manage a quarrel fairly,
Upon fit terms.

Face. It seems, sir, you are but young
About the town, that can make that a question.

Kas. Sir, not so young but I have heard some speech
Of the angry boys, and seen them take tobacco,
And in his shop; and I can take it too.
And I would fain be one of 'em, and go down
And practise in the country.

Face. Sir, for the duello,
The doctor, I assure you, shall inform you,
To the least shadow of a hair, and show you
An instrument he has of his own making,
Wherewith no sooner shall you make report
Of any quarrel, but he will take the height on't
Most instantly, and tell in what degree
Of safety it lies in, or mortality.
And how it may be borne, whether in a right line,
Or a half-circle; or may else be cast
Into an angle blunt, if not acute:
All this he will demonstrate. And then, rules
To give and take the lie by.

Kas. How! to take it?

Face. Yes, in oblique he'll show you, or in circle;
But never in diameter. The whole town
Study his theorems, and dispute them ordinarily
At the eating academies.

Kas. But does he teach
Living by the wits too?

Face. Anything whatever.
You can not think that subtlety but he reads it.
He made me a captain. I was a stark pimp,
Just of your standing, 'fore I met with him;
It is not two months since. I'll tell you his method:
First, he will enter you at some ordinary.

Kas. No, I'll not come there; you shall pardon me.

Face. For why, sir?

Kas. There's gaming there, and tricks.

Face. Why, would you be
A gallant, and not game?

Kas. Ay, 'twill spend a man.

Face. Spend you! It will repair you when you are spent;
How do they live by their wits there, that have vented
Six times your fortunes?

Kas. What, three thousand a-year!

Face. Ay, forty thousand.

Kas. Are there such?

Face. Ay, sir,

And gallants yet. Here's a young gentleman
Is born to nothing — [*Points to DAPPER*] — forty marks a-year,
Which I count nothing: — he is to be initiated,
And have a fly of the doctor. He will win you,
By irresistible luck, within this fortnight,
Enough to buy a barony. They will set him
Upmost, at the groom porters, all the Christmas:
And for the whole year through, at every place
Where there is play, present him with the chair;
The best attendance, the best drink; sometimes
Two glasses of canary, and pay nothing;
The purest linen and the sharpest knife,
The partridge next his trencher; and somewhere
The dainty nook in private with the dainty.
You shall have your ordinaries bid for him,
As playhouses for a poet; and the master
Pray him aloud to name what dish he affects,
Which must be buttered shrimps; and those that drink
To no mouth else, will drink to his, as being
The goodly president mouth of all the board.

Kas. Do you not gull one?

Face. Ods, my life! do you think it?

You shall have a cast commander (can but get
In credit with a glover, or a spurrier,
For some two pair of either's ware aforehand),
Will by most swift posts, dealing with him,
Arrive at competent means to keep himself,
And be admired for 't.

Kas. Will the doctor teach this?

Face. He will do more, sir: when your land is gone,
As men of spirit hate to keep earth long
In a vacation, when small money is stirring,
And ordinaries suspended till the term,
He'll show a perspective, where on one side
You shall behold the faces and the persons
Of all sufficient young heirs in town,
Whose bonds are current for commodity;
On th' other side, the merchants' forms, and others,
That without help of any second broker,
Who would expect a share, will trust such parcels:
In the third square, the very street and sign

Where the commodity dwells, and does but wait
To be delivered, be it pepper, soap,
Hops, or tobacco, oatmeal, wood, or cheeses.
All of which you may so handle, to enjoy
To your own use, and never stand obliged.

Kas. I' faith! is he such a fellow?

Face. Why, Nab, here knows him.

And then for making matches for rich widows,
Young gentlewomen, heirs, the fortunatest man!
He's sent to, far and near, all over England,
To have his counsel, and to know their fortunes.

Kas. God's will, my suster shall see him.

Face. I'll tell you, sir,

What he did tell me of Nab. It's a strange thing: —
By the way, you must eat no cheese, Nab, it breeds melancholy,
And that same melancholy breeds worms; but pass it: —
He told me honest Nab here was ne'er at tavern
But once in 's life.

Drug. Truth, and no more I was not.

Face. And then he was so sick —

Drug. Could he tell you that too?

Face. How should I know it?

Drug. In troth we had been a-shooting,
And had a piece of fat ram mutton to supper,
That lay so heavy o' my stomach —

Face. And he has no head

To bear any wine; for what with the noise of the fiddlers
And care of his shop, for he dares keep no servants —

Drug. My head did so ache —

Face. As he was fain to be brought home,
The doctor told me: and then a good old woman —

Drug. Yes, faith — she dwells in Sea-coal Lane — did cure me,
With sodden ale and pellitory of the wall;
Cost me but twopence. — I had another sickness
Was worse than that.

Face. Ay, that was with the grief
Thou took'st for being 'sessed at eighteen-pence
For the waterwork.

Drug. In truth, and it was like
T' have cost me almost my life.

Face. Thy hair went off?

Drug. Yes, sir; 't was done for spite.

Face. Nay, so says the doctor.

Kas. Pray thee, tobacco boy, go fetch my suster;
I'll see this learned boy before I go,
And so shall she.

Face. Sir, he is busy now ;
But if you have a sister to fetch hither,
Perhaps your own pains may command her sooner,
And he by that time will be free.

Kas. I go.

[*Exit.*

Face. Drugger, she's thine : the damask !

[*Exit ABEL.*

Subtle and I

Must wrestle for her. [*Aside.*] Come on, Master Dapper,
To give your cause dispatch ; have you performed
The ceremonies were enjoined you ?

Dap. Yes, of the vinegar
And the clean shirt.

Face. 'Tis well : that shirt may do you
More worship than you think. Your aunt's a-fire,
But that she will not show it, t' have a sight of you.
Have you provided for her grace's servants ?

Dap. Yes, here are six score Edward shillings.

Face. Good !

Dap. And an old Harry sovereign.

Face. Very good !

Dap. And three James shillings, and an Elizabeth groat ;
Just twenty nobles.

Face. Oh, you are too just.
I would you had had the other noble in Maries.

Dap. I have some Philip and Maries.

Face. Ay, those same
Are best of all : where are they ? Hark, the doctor.

Enter SUBTLE *disguised like a priest of Fairy, with a stripe of cloth.*

Sub. [*In a feigned voice.*] Is yet her grace's cousin come ?

Face. He is come.

Sub. And is he fasting ?

Face. Yes.

Sub. And hath cried "hum" ?

Face. Thrice, you must answer.

Dap. Thrice.

Sub. And as oft "buz" ?

Face. If you have, say.

Dap. I have.

Sub. Then, to her cuz,
Hoping that he hath vinegared his senses,
As he was bid, the Fairy Queen dispenses,
By me, this robe, the petticoat of fortune ;
Which that he straight put on, she doth importune.

And though to fortune near be her petticoat,
 Yet nearer is her smock, the queen doth note :
 And therefore, even of that a piece she hath sent,
 Which, being a child, to wrap him in was rent ;
 And prays him for a scarf he now will wear it,
 With as much love as then her grace did tear it,
 About his eyes — [*They blind him with the rag*] — to show he
 is fortunate.

And, trusting unto her to make his state,
 He'll throw away all worldly pelf about him ;
 Which that he will perform, he doth not doubt him.

Face. She need not doubt him, sir. Alas, he has nothing
 But what he will part withal as willingly
 Upon her grace's word — throw away your purse —
 As she would ask it ; — handkerchiefs and all —

[*He throws away as they bid him.*]

She can not bid that thing but he'll obey. —
 If you have a ring about you, cast it off,
 Or a silver seal at your wrist ; her grace will send
 Her fairies here to search you, therefore deal
 Directly with her highness ; if they find
 That you conceal a mite, you are undone.

Dap. Truly, there's all.

Face. All what?

Dap. My money : truly.

Face. Keep nothing that is transitory about you.

Bid Dol play music. — [*Aside to SUBTLE.*] — Look, the elves are
 come

[*DOL plays on the cittern within.*]

To pinch you, if you tell not truth. Advise you.

[*They pinch him.*]

Dap. Oh ! I have a paper with a spur-ryal in't.

Face. Ti, ti.

They knew't, they say.

Sub. Ti, ti, ti, ti. He has more yet.

Face. Ti, ti-ti-ti. In the other pocket.

[*Aside to SUB.*]

Sub. Titi, titi, titi, titi.

They must pinch him or he will never confess, they say.

[*They pinch him again.*]

Dap. Oh, oh !

Face. Nay, pray you hold : he is her grace's nephew.

Ti, ti, ti ! What care you ? Good faith you shall care. —

Deal plainly, sir, and shame the fairies. Show

You are innocent.

Dap. By this good light, I have nothing.

Sub. Ti, ti, ti, ti, to, ta. He does equivocate, she says :

Ti, ti, do ti, ti, ti, do, ti, da ; and swears by the light
when he is blinded.

Dap. By this good dark, I have nothing but a half-crown
Of gold about my wrist, that my love gave me ;
And a leaden heart I wore since she forsook me.

Face. I thought 'twas something. And would you incur
Your aunt's displeasure for these trifles? Come,
I had rather you had thrown away twenty half-crowns.

[*Takes it off.*]

You may wear your leaden heart still. —

Enter DOL hastily.

How now !

Sub. What news, Dol?

Dol. Yonder 's your knight, Sir Mammon.

Face. Ods lid, we never thought of him till now !
Where is he?

Dol. Here hard by : he is at the door.

Sub. And you are not ready, now ! Dol, get his suit.

[*Exit DOL.*]

He must not be sent back.

Face. Oh, by no means.

What shall we do with this same puffin here,
Now he's on the spit?

Sub. Why, lay him back awhile
With some device.

Re-enter DOL with FACE's clothes.

—Ti, ti, ti, ti, ti, ti. Would her grace speak with me?

I come. — Help, Dol !

[*Knocking without.*]

Face. [*Speaks through the key-hole.*] Who's there? Sir
Epicure,

My master's in the way. Please you to walk
Three or four turns, but till his back be turned,
And I am for you. Quickly, Dol !

Sub. Her grace

Commends her kindly to you, Master Dapper.

Dap. I long to see her grace.

Sub. She now is set

At dinner in her bed, and she has sent you
From her own private trencher a dead mouse,
And a piece of gingerbread, to be merry withal,
And stay your stomach, lest you faint with fasting.
Yet if you could hold out till she saw you, she says
It would be better for you.

Face. Sir, he shall
Hold out, an 'twere this two hours, for her highness ;
I can assure you that. We will not lose
All we have done.

Sub. He must not see nor speak
To anybody till then.

Face. For that we'll put, sir,
A stay in's mouth.

Sub. Of what?

Face. Of gingerbread.
Make you it fit. He that hath pleased her grace
Thus far, shall not now crinkle for a little. —
Gape, sir, and let him fit you.

[*Speaking through the key-hole.*] Sir Epicure, I am yours, sir,
by-and-by. [*Excunt with DAPPER.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I. — A ROOM IN LOVEWIT'S HOUSE

Enter FACE and MAMMON.

FACE. Oh, sir, you are come in the only finest time.

Mam. Where's master?

Face. Now preparing for projection, sir.
Your stuff will be all changed shortly.

Mam. Into gold?

Face. To gold and silver, sir.

Mam. Silver I care not for.

Face. Yes, sir, a little to give beggars.

Mam. Where's the lady?

Face. At hand here. I have told her such brave things of you,
Touching your bounty and your noble spirit —

Mam. Hast thou?

Face. As she is almost in her fit to see you.
But, good sir, no divinity in your conference,
For fear of putting her in rage.

Mam. I warrant thee.

Face. Six men will not hold her down ; and then
If the old man should hear or see you —

Mam. Fear not.

Face. The very house, sir, would run mad. You know it,
How scrupulous he is, and violent,
'Gainst the least act of sin. Physic or mathematics,

Poetry, state, or frolic, as I told you,
She will endure, and never startle ; but
No word of controversy.

Mam. I am schooled, good Ulen.

Face. And you must praise her house, remember that,
And her nobility.

Mam. Let me alone :

No herald, no, nor antiquity, Lungs,
Shall do it better. Go.

Face. Why, this is yet
A kind of modern happiness to have
Dol Common for a great lady.

[*Aside and exit.*

Mam. Now, Epicure,
Heighten thyself, talk to her all in gold ;
Rain her as many showers as Jove did drops
Unto his Danaë ; show the god a miser
Compared with Mammon. What ! The stone will do't.
She shall feel gold, taste gold, hear gold, sleep gold ;
Nay, we will *concumere* gold : I will be puissant
And mighty in my talk to her.

Re-enter FACE, with DOL richly dressed.

Here she comes.

Face. To him, Dol, suckle him. This is the noble knight ;
I told your ladyship —

Mam. Madam, with your pardon,
I kiss your vesture.

Dol. Sir, I were uncivil
If I would suffer that ; my lip to you, sir.

Mam. I hope my lord, your brother, be in health, lady.

Dol. My lord, my brother is, though I no lady, sir.

Face. Well said my Guinea bird.

[*Aside.*

Mam. Right noble madam —

Face. Oh, we shall have most fierce idolatry.

[*Aside.*

Mam. 'Tis your prerogative —

Dol. Rather your courtesy.

Mam. Were there nought else to enlarge your virtues to me,
These answers speak your breeding and your blood.

Dol. Blood we boast none, sir, a poor baron's daughter.

Mam. Poor ! And gat you ? Profane not. Had your father
Slept all the happy remnant of his life,
He had done enough to make himself, his issue,
And his posterity noble.

Dol. Sir, although
We may be said to want the gilt and trappings,

The dress of honour, yet we strive to keep
The seeds and the materials.

Mam. I do see

The old ingredient, virtue, was not lost,
Nor the drug money used to make your compound.
There is a strange nobility in your eye,
This lip, that chin ! Methinks you do resemble
One of the Austrian princes.

Face. Very like !

Her father was an Irish costermonger.

[*Aside.*

Mam. The house of Valois just had such a nose,
And such a forehead yet the Medici
Of Florence boast.

Dol. Troth, and I have been likened
To all these princes.

Face. I'll be sworn I heard it.

Mam. I know not how ! It is not any one,
But e'en the very choice of all their features.

Face. I'll in, and laugh.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Mam. A certain touch, or air,
That sparkles, a divinity beyond
An earthly beauty !

Dol. Oh, you play the courtier.

Mam. Good lady, give me leave——

Dol. In faith I may not,
To mock me, sir.

Mam. To burn in this sweet flame ;
The phoenix never knew a nobler death.

Dol. Nay, now you court the courtier, and destroy
What you would build : this art, sir, in your words
Calls your whole faith in question.

Mam. By my soul——

Dol. Nay, oaths are made of the same air, sir.

Mam. Nature
Never bestow'd upon mortality
A more unblamed, a more harmonious feature ;
She played the step-dame in all faces else :
Sweet madam, let me be particular——

Dol. Particular, sir ! I pray you know your distance.

Mam. In no ill sense, sweet lady ; but to ask
How your fair graces pass the hours. I see
You are lodged here in the house of a rare man,
An excellent artist ; but what 's that to you ?

Dol. Yes, sir ; I study here the mathematics
And distillation.

Mam. Oh, I cry your pardon.
He's a divine instructor : can extract
The souls of all things by his art ; call all
The virtues and the miracles of the sun
Into a temperate furnace ; teach dull nature
What her own forces are. A man, the emperor
Has courted above Kelly ; sent his medals
And chains to invite him.

Dol. Ay, and for his physic, sir ——

Mam. Above the art of Æsculapius,
That drew the envy of the Thunderer !
I know all this, and more.

Dol. Troth, I am taken, sir,
Whole with these studies, that contemplate nature.

Mam. It is a noble humour ; but this form
Was not intended to so dark a use.
Had you been crooked, foul, of some coarse mould,
A cloister had done well ; but such a feature
That might stand up the glory of a kingdom,
To live recluse, is a mere solecism,
Though in a nunnery. It must not be.
I muse, my lord your brother will permit it :
You should spend half my land first, were I he.
Does not this diamond better on my finger
Than in the quarry ?

Dol. Yes.

Mam. Why, you are like it.
You were created, lady, for the light.
Here, you shall wear it ; take it, the first pledge
Of what I speak, to bind you to believe me.

Dol. In chains of adamant ?

Mam. Yes, the strongest bands.
And take a secret too — here, by your side,
Doth stand this hour the happiest man in Europe.

Dol. You are contented, sir ?

Mam. Nay, in true being
The envy of princes and the fear of states.

Dol. Say you so, Sir Epicure ?

Mam. Yes, and thou shalt prove it,
Daughter of honour. I have cast mine eye
Upon thy form, and I will rear this beauty
Above all styles.

Dol. You mean no treason, sir ?

Mam. No, I will take away that jealousy.
I am the lord of the philosopher's stone,
And thou the lady.

Dol. How sir! Have you that?

Mam. I am the master of the mastery.
This day the good old wretch here o' the house
Has made it for us; now he's at projection.
Think therefore thy first wish now, let me hear it,
And it shall rain into thy lap, no shower,
But floods of gold, whole cataracts, a deluge,
To get a nation on thee.

Dol. You are pleased, sir,
To work on the ambition of our sex.

Mam. I am pleased the glory of her sex should know
This nook, here, of the Friars is no climate
For her to live obscurely in, to learn
Physic and surgery, for the constable's wife
Of some odd hundred in Essex; but come forth
And taste the air of palaces; eat, drink
The toils of empirics, and their boasted practice;
Tincture of pearl and coral, gold and amber;
Be seen at feasts and triumphs; have it asked,
What miracle she is; set all the eyes
Of court a-fire, like a burning glass,
And work them into cinders, when the jewels
Of twenty states adorn thee, and the light
Strikes out the stars! that when thy name is mentioned
Queens may look pale; and we but showing our love,
Nero's Poppæa may be lost in story!
Thus will we have it.

Dol. I could well consent, sir.
But in a monarchy how will this be?
The prince will soon take notice, and both seize
You and your stone, it being a wealth unfit
For any private subject.

Mam. If he knew it.

Dol. Yourself do boast it, sir.

Mam. To thee, my life.

Dol. Oh, but beware, sir! you may come to end
The remnant of your days in a loathed prison,
By speaking of it.

Mam. 'Tis no idle fear:
We'll therefore go withal, my girl, and live
In a free state, where we will eat our mullets
Soused in high-country wines, sup pheasants' eggs,
And have our cockles boiled in silver shells;
Our shrimps to swim again, as when they lived,
In a rare butter made of dolphins' milk,

Whose cream does look like opals : and with these
Delicate meats, set ourselves high for pleasure,
And take us down again, and then renew
Our youth and strength with drinking the elixir,
And so enjoy a perpetuity
Of life and lust ! And thou shalt have thy wardrobe
Richer than nature's, still to change thyself,
And vary oftener, for thy pride, than she
Or art, her wise and almost equal servant.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Sir, you are too loud. I hear you every word
Into the laboratory. Some fitter place ;
The garden, or great chamber above. How like you her ?

Mam. Excellent ! Lungs. There's for thee.

[*Gives him money.*]

Face. But do you hear ?
Good sir, beware, no mention of the rabbins.

Mam. We think not on 'em. [*Exeunt MAM. and DOL.*]

Face. Oh, it is well, sir. — Subtle !

Enter SUBTLE.

Dost thou not laugh ?

Sub. Yes ; are they gone ?

Face. All's clear.

Sub. The widow is come.

Face. And your quarelling disciple ?

Sub. Ay.

Face. I must to my captainship again, then.

Sub. Stay, bring them in first.

Face. So I meant. What is she ?

A bonnibel ?

Sub. I know not.

Face. We'll draw lots :

You'll stand to that ?

Sub. What else ?

Face. Oh, for a suit,

To fall now like a curtain, flap !

Sub. To the door, man.

Face. You'll have the first kiss, 'cause I am not ready. [*Exit.*]

Sub. Yes, and perhaps hit you through both the nostrils.

Face. [*Within.*] Who would you speak with ?

Kas. [*Within.*] Where's the captain ?

Face. [*Within.*] Gone, sir,
About some business.

Kas. [*Within.*] Gone!

Face. [*Within.*] He'll return straight.
But Master Doctor, his lieutenant, is here.

Enter KASTRIL, followed by DAME PLIANT.

Sub. Come near, my worshipful boy, my *terra fili*,
That is, my boy of land; make thy approaches:
Welcome; I know thy lusts and thy desires,
And I will serve and satisfy them. Begin,
Charge me from thence, or thence, or in this line;
Here is my centre: ground thy quarrel.

Kas. You lie.

Sub. How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie?
For what, my sudden boy?

Kas. Nay, that look you to,
I am aforehand.

Sub. Oh, this is no true grammar,
And as ill logic! You must render causes, child,
Your first and second intentions, know your canons
And your divisions, moods, degrees, and differences,
Your predicaments, substance, and accident,
Series, extern and intern, with their causes,
Efficient, material, formal, final,
And have your elements perfect.

Kas. What is this!
The angry tongue he talks in?

[*Aside.*

Sub. That false precept
Of being aforehand has deceived a number,
And made them enter quarrels, oftentimes
Before they were aware; and afterward
Against their wills.

Kas. How must I do then, sir?

Sub. I cry this lady mercy: she should first
Have been saluted. [*Kisses her.*] I do call you lady,
Because you are to be one ere't be long,
My soft and buxom widow.

Kas. Is she, i' faith?

Sub. Yes, or my art is an egregious liar.

Kas. How know you?

Sub. By inspection on her forehead,
And subtlety of her lip, which must be tasted
Often, to make a judgment. [*Kisses her again.*]
'Slight, she melts

Like a myrobolane: — here is yet a line,
In *rivo frontis*, tells me he is no knight.

Dame P. What is he then, sir?

Sub. Let me see your hand.

Oh, your *luna fortuna* makes it plain;

And stella here in *Monte Veneris*.

But, most of all, *junctura annularis*.

He is a soldier, or a man of art, lady,

But shall have some great honour shortly.

Dame P. Brother,

He's a rare man, believe me!

Re-enter FACE in his uniform.

Kas. Hold your peace.

Here comes the t' other rare man. — Save you, captain.

Face. Good Master Kastril! Is this your sister?

Kas. Ay, sir.

Please you to kiss her, and be proud to know her.

Face. I shall be proud to know you, lady. [*Kisses her.*]

Dame P. Brother,

He calls me lady too.

Kas. Ay, peace: I heard it.

[*Takes her aside.*]

Face. The count is come.

Sub. Where is he?

Face. At the door.

Sub. Why, you must entertain him.

Face. What will you do

With these the while?

Sub. Why, have them up, and show them

Some fustian book, or the dark glass.

Face. 'Fore God,

She is a delicate dab chick! I must have her.

[*Exit.*]

Sub. Must you! ay, if your fortune will, you must. —

Come sir, the captain will come to us presently:

I'll have you to my chamber of demonstrations,

Where I will show you both the grammar and logic

And rhetoric of quarreling; my whole method

Drawn out in tables; and my instrument,

That hath several scales upon 't, shall make you

Able to quarrel at a straw's breadth by moonlight.

And, lady, I'll have you look in a glass,

Some half an hour, but to clear your eyesight,

Against you see your fortune; which is greater

Than I may judge upon the sudden, trust me.

Exit, followed by KAS. and DAME P.

Face. 'Tis true, you shall not open them, indeed;

Nor have them forth, do you see? not forth, Dol.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Where are you, doctor?

Sub. [*Within.*] I'll come to you presently.

Face. I will have this same widow, now I have seen her,
On any composition.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

Sub. What do you say?

Face. Have you disposed of them?

Sub. I have sent them up.

Face. Subtle, in troth, I needs must have this widow.

Sub. Is that the matter?

Face. Nay, but hear me.

Sub. Go to,

If you rebel once, Dol shall know it all :

Therefore be quiet, and obey your chance.

Face. Nay, thou art so violent now. Do but conceive
Thou art old and canst not serve ——

Sub. Who can not? I?

'Slight, I will serve her with thee, for a ——

Face. Nay,

But understand : I'll give you composition.

Sub. I will not treat with thee ; what ! sell my fortune?
'Tis better than my birthright. Do not murmur :
Win her, and carry her. If you grumble, Dol
Knows it directly.

Face. Well, sir, I am silent.

Will you go help to fetch in Don in state?

[*Exit.*

Sub. I follow you, sir : we must keep Face in awe,
Or he will overlook us like a tyrant.

Re-enter FACE, introducing SURLY disguised as a Spaniard.

Brain of a tailor ! who comes here ? Don John !

Sur. Señores, beso las manos á vuestras mercedes.

Sub. Would you had stooped a little.

Face. Peace, Subtle.

Sub. Stab me : I shall never hold, man.

He looks in that deep ruff like a head in a platter,
Served in by a short cloak upon two trestles.

Face. Or, what do you say to a collar of brawn, cut down
Beneath the souse, and wriggled with a knife?

Sub. 'Slud, he does look too fat to be a Spaniard.

Face. Perhaps some Fleming or some Hollander got him
In D'Alva's time ; Count Egmont's bastard.

Sub. Don,
Your scurvy, yellow, Madrid face is welcome.

Sur. Gratia.

Sub. He speaks out of a fortification.
Pray God he have no squibs in those deep sets.

Sur. Por dios, senores, muy linda casa !

Sub. What says he ?

Face. Praises the house, I think ;
I know no more but 's action.

Sub. Yes, the *casa*,
My precious Diego, will prove fair enough
To cozen you in. Do you mark ? You shall
Be cozened, Diego.

Face. Cozened, do you see,
My worthy Donzel, cozened.

Sur. Entiendo.

Sub. Do you intend it ? So do we, dear Don.
Have you brought pistolets or portagues,
My solemn Don ? — Dost thou feel any ?

Face. [*Feels his pockets.*] Full.

Sub. You shall be emptied, Don, pumped and drawn
Dry, as they say.

Face. Milked, in troth, sweet Don.

Sub. See all the monsters ; the great lion of all, Don.

Sur. Con licencia, se puede ver á esta señora ?

Sub. What talks he now ?

Face. Of the señora.

Sub. Oh, Don,
That is the lioness, which you shall see
Also, my Don.

Face. 'Slid, Subtle, how shall we do ?

Sub. For what ?

Face. Why Dol's employed, you know.

Sub. That's true,
'Fore heaven I know not : he must stay, that's all.

Face. Stay ! that he must not by no means.

Sub. No ! Why ?

Face. Unless you'll mar all. 'Slight, he will suspect it :
And then he will not pay, not half so well.
This is a travelled master, and does know
All the delays ; a notable hot rascal,
And looks already rampant.

Sub. 'Sdeath, and Mammon must not be troubled.

Face. Mammon ! in no case.

Sub. What shall we do then ?

Face. Think : you must be sudden.

Sur. Entiendo que la señora es tan hermosa, que codicio tan á verla, como la bien aventurança de mi vida.

Face. "Mi vida !" 'Slid, Subtle, he puts me in mind o' the widow.

What dost thou say to draw her to it, ha !
And tell her 'tis her fortune ? All our venture
Now lies upon 't. It is but one man more,
Which of us chance to have her : and beside, —
What dost thou think on 't, Subtle ?

Sub. Who, I ? Why —

Face. The credit of our house too is engaged.

Sub. You made me an offer for my share erewhile.
What wilt thou give me i' faith ?

Face. Oh, by that light
I'll not buy now : you know your doom to me.
E'en take your lot, obey your chance, sir ; win her,
And wear her, sir, for me.

Sub. 'Slight, I'll not have her then.

Face. It is the common cause ; therefore bethink you.
Dol else must know it as you said.

Sub. I care not.

Sur. Señores, porqué se tarda tanta ?

Sub. Faith, I am not fit, I am old.

Face. That's now no reason, sir.

Sur. Puede ser, de hacer burla de mi amor ?

Face. You hear the Don too ? by this air I call,
And loose the hinges : Dol !

Sub. A plague of hell —

Face. Will you then do ?

Sub. You are a terrible rogue !
I'll think of this : will you, sir, call the widow ?

Face. Yes, and I'll take her too with all her faults,
Now I do think on 't better.

Sub. With all my heart, sir ;
Am I discharged o' the lot ?

Face. As you please.

Sub. Hands.

[*They take hands.*]

Face. Remember now, that upon any change
You never claim her.

Sub. Much good joy and health to you, sir.
Marry her so ! Fate, let me wed a witch first.

Sur. Por estas honradas barbas —

Sub. He swears by his beard.
Dispatch, and call the brother too.

[*Exit FACE.*]

Sur. Tengo duda, señores,
Que no me hagan alguna traycion.

Sub. How, issue on? yes, praesto, senor. Please you
"Enthratha" the "chambratha," worthy Don :
Where if you please the fates, in your "bathada,"
You shall be soaked, and stroked, and tubbed, and rubbed,
And scrubbed, and fubbed, dear Don, before you go.
You shall in faith, my scurvy baboon Don.
Be curried, clawed, and flawed, and tawed indeed.
I will the heartlier go about it now,
And make the widow yours so much the sooner,
To be revenged on this impetuous Face :
The quickly doing of it is the grace. [*Exeunt SUB. and SURLY.*]

SCENE II.—ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter FACE, KASTRIL, and Dame PLIANT.

Face. Come, lady : I knew the doctor would not leave
Till he had found the very nick of her fortune.

Kas. To be a countess, say you, a Spanish countess, sir?

Dame P. Why, is that better than an English countess?

Face. Better ! 'Slight, make you that a question, lady?

Kas. Nay, she is a fool, captain, you must pardon her.

Face. Ask from your courtier, to your inns of court man,
To your mere milliner ; they will tell you all,
Your Spanish gennet is the best horse ; your Spanish
Stoup is the best garb : your Spanish beard
Is the best cut ; your Spanish ruffs are the best
Wear ; your Spanish pavin the best dance ;
Your Spanish titillation in a glove
The best perfume : and for your Spanish pike
And Spanish blade, let your poor captain speak —
Here comes the doctor.

Enter SUBTLE with a paper.

Sub. My most honoured lady,
For so I am now to style you, having found
By this my scheme you are to undergo
An honourable fortune very shortly,
What will you say now, if some —

Face. I have told her all, sir ;
And her right worshipful brother here, that she shall be
A countess ; do not delay them, sir : a Spanish countess.

Sub. Still, my scarce-worshipful captain, you can keep
No secret ! Well, since he has told you, madam,
Do you forgive him, and I do.

Kas. She shall do that, sir ;
I'll look to 't, 't is my charge.

Sub. Well, then ; nought rests
But that she fit her love now to her fortune.

Dame P. Truly, I shall never brook a Spaniard.

Sub. No !

Dame P. Never since eighty-eight could I abide them,
And that was some three years afore I was born, in truth.

Sub. Come, you must love him, or be miserable ;
Choose which you will.

Face. By this good rush, persuade her,
She will cry strawberries else within this twelvemonth.

Sub. Nay, shads and mackerel, which is worse.

Face. Indeed, sir !

Kas. Ods lid, you shall love him, or I'll kick you.

Dame P. Why,
I'll do as you will have me, brother.

Kas. Do.

Or by this hand I'll maul you.

Face. Nay, good sir,
Be not so fierce.

Sub. No, my enraged child ;
She will be ruled. What, when she comes to taste
The pleasures of a countess ! to be courted ——

Face. And kissed, and ruffled !

Sub. Ay, behind the hangings.

Face. And then come forth in pomp !

Sub. And know her state !

Face. Of keeping all the idolators of the chamber
Barer to her than at their prayers !

Sub. Is served
Upon the knee !

Face. And has her pages, ushers,
Footmen, and coaches ——

Sub. Her six mares ——

Face. Nay, eight !

Sub. To hurry her through London, to the Exchange,
Bethlem, the china-houses ——

Face. Yes, and have
The citizens gape at her, and praise her tires,
And my lord's humble bands, that ride with her.

Kas. Most brave ! By this hand, you are not my suster
If you refuse.

Dame P. I will not refuse, brother.

Enter SURLY.

Sur. Que es esto, señores, que non se venga?
Esta tardanza me mata!

Face. It is the count come:
The doctor knew he would be here, by his art.

Sub. En gallanta madama, Don! gallantissima!

Sur. Por todos los dioses, la mas acabada
Hermosura, que he visto en mi vida!

Face. Is't not a gallant language that they speak?

Kas. An admirable language! Is't not French?

Face. No, Spanish, sir.

Kas. It goes like law-French,
And that, they say, is the courtliest language.

Face. List, sir.

Sur. El sol ha perdido su lumbre, con el
Resplandor que trae esta dama! Valga me dios!

Face. He admires your sister.

Kas. Must not she make curtsey?

Sub. Ods will, she must go to him, man, and kiss him!
It is the Spanish fashion for the women
To make first court.

Face. 'Tis true he tells you, sir:
His art knows all.

Sur. Porque no se acude?

Kas. He speaks to her, I think.

Face. That he does, sir.

Sur. Por el amor de dios, que es esto, que se tarda?

Kas. Nay, see; she will not understand him! Gull,
Noddy.

Dame P. What say you, brother?

Kas. Ass, my suster.
Go kuss him, as the cunning man would have you;
I'll thrust a pin in your back else.

Face. Oh no, sir.

Sur. Señora mia, mi persona esta muy indigna
De allegar á tanta hermosura.

Face. Does he not use her bravely?

Kas. Bravely, i' faith!

Face. Nay, he will use her better.

Kas. Do you think so?

Sur. Señora, si será servida, entremos.

[*Exit with DAME PLIANT.*

Kas. Where does he carry her?

Face. Into the garden, sir;
Take you no thought: I must interpret for her.

Sub. Give Dol the word. — [*Aside to FACE, who goes out.*] —
Come, my fierce child, advance,
We'll to our quarreling lesson again.

Kas. Agreed.
I love a Spanish boy with all my heart.

Sub. Nay, and by this means, sir, you shall be brother
To a great count.

Kas. Ay, I knew that at first.
This match will advance the house of the Kastrils.

Sub. Pray God your sister prove but pliant !

Kas. Why,
Her name is so, by her other husband.

Sub. How ?

Kas. The Widow Pliant. Knew you not that ?

Sub. No, faith, sir ;
Yet, by erection of her figure, I guessed it.
Come, let's go practise.

Kas. Yes, but do you think, doctor,
I e'er shall quarrel well ?

Sub. I warrant you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter DOL in her fit of raving, followed by MAMMON.

Dol. For after Alexander's death —

Mam. Good lady —

Dol. That Perdiccas and Antigonus were slain,
The two that stood, Seleuc', and Ptolemy —

Mam. Madam.

Dol. Made up the two legs, and the fourth beast,
That was Gog-north and Egypt-south : which after
Was called Gog-iron-leg and South-iron-leg —

Mam. Lady —

Dol. And then Gog-horned. So was Egypt too :
Then Egypt-clay-leg and Gog-clay-leg —

Mam. Sweet madam —

Dol. And last Gog-dust and Egypt-dust, which fall
In the last link of the fourth chain. And these
Be stars in story, which none see or look at —

Mam. What shall I do ?

Dol. For, as he says, except
We call the rabbins, and the heathen Greeks —

Mam. Dear lady —

Dol. To come from Salem and from Athens,
And teach the people of Great Britain —

Enter FACE, hastily, in his servant's dress.

Face. What's the matter, sir?

Dol. To speak the tongue of Eber and Javan ——

Mam. Oh,
She's in her fit.

Dol. We shall know nothing ——

Face. Death, sir,
We are undone !

Dol. Where then a learned linguist
Shall see the ancient used communion
Of vowels and consonants ——

Face. My master will hear !

Dol. A wisdom which Pythagoras held most high ——

Mam. Sweet honourable lady !

Dol. To comprise
All sounds of voices, in few marks of letters ——

Face. Nay, you must never hope to lay her now.

[They all speak.]

Dol. And so we may arrive by Talmud skill
And profane Greek, to raise the building up
Of Helen's house against the Ishmaelite,
King of Thogarma, and his habergions
Brimstony, blue, and fiery ; and the force
Of King Abaddon, and the beast of Cittim :
Which Rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos,
And Aben Ezra do interpret Rome.

Face. How did you put her into 't? *[Together with DOL.]*

Mam. Alas ! I talked
Of a fifth monarchy I would erect,
With the philosopher's stone, by chance, and she
Falls on the other four straight.

Face. Out of Broughton !
I told you so. 'Slid, stop her mouth.

Mam. Is 't best?

Face. She'll never leave else. If the old man hear her ——

Sub. *[Within.]* What's to do there?

Face. Oh, we are lost ! Now she hears him, she is quiet.

Enter SUBTLE ; they run different ways.

Mam. Where shall I hide me !

Sub. How ! what sight is here?
Close deeds of darkness, and that shun the light !
Bring him again. Who is he? What, my son !
Oh, I have lived too long.

Mam. Nay, good, dear father,
There was no evil purpose.

Sub. Not ! and flee me,
When I come in ?

Mam. That was my error.

Sub. Error !

Guilt, guilt, my son : give it the right name. No marvel
If I found check in our great work within,
When such affairs as these were managing.

Mam. Why, have you so ?

Sub. It has stood still this half-hour :
And all the rest of our less works gone back.
Where is the instrument of wickedness,
My lewd false drudge ?

Mam. Nay, good sir, blame not him ;
Believe me, 'twas against his will or knowledge :
I saw her by chance.

Sub. Will you commit more sin,
To excuse a varlet ?

Mam. By my hope 'tis true sir.

Sub. Nay, then I wonder less, if you, for whom
The blessing was prepared, would so tempt heaven,
And lose your fortunes.

Mam. Why, sir ?

Sub. This will retard
The work a month at least.

Mam. Why, if it do,
What remedy ? But think it not, good father :
Our purposes were honest.

Sub. As they were,
So the reward will prove. — *[A loud explosion within.*
How now ! Ah, me !
God and all saints be good to us.

Re-enter FACE.

What's that ?

Face. Oh, sir, we are defeated ! All the works
Are flown "in fumo," every glass is burst :
Furnace and all rent down ; as if a bolt
Of thunder had been driven through the house.
Retorts, receivers, pelicans, bolt heads,
All struck in shivers ! *[SUBTLE falls down as in a swoon.*

Help, good sir ! Alas,
Coldness and death invades him. Nay, Sir Mammon,
Do the fair offices of a man ! You stand

As you were readier to depart than he. [*Knocking within.*
Who's there? My lord, her brother is come.

Mam. Ha, Lungs!

Face. His coach is at the door. Avoid his sight,
For he's as furious as his sister's mad.

Mam. Alas!

Face. My brain is quite undone with the fume, sir,
I ne'er must hope to be mine own man again.

Mam. Is all lost, Lungs? Will nothing be preserved
Of all our cost?

Face. Faith, very little, sir;
A peck of coals or so, which is cold comfort, sir.

Mam. Oh, my voluptuous mind! I am justly punished.

Face. And so am I, sir.

Mam. Cast forth from all my hopes ——

Face. Nay, certainties, sir.

Mam. By mine own base affections.

Sub. [*Seeming to come to himself.*] Oh, the curst fruits of vice
and lust!

Mam. Good father,
It was my sin. Forgive it.

Sub. Hangs my roof
Over us still, and will not fall, O justice,
Upon us for this wicked man!

Face. Nay, look, sir,
You grieve him now with staying in his sight;
Good, sir, the nobleman will come too, and take you,
And that may breed a tragedy.

Mam. I'll go.

Face. Ay, and repent at home, sir. It may be,
For some good penance you may have it yet;
A hundred pounds to the box at Bethlem ——

Mam. Yes.

Face. For the restoring such as have their wits.

Mam. I'll do 't.

Face. I'll send one to you to receive it.

Mam. Do.

Is no projection left?

Face. All flown, or stinks, sir.

Mam. Will nought be saved that's good for med'cine,
think'st thou?

Face. I can not tell, sir. There will be perhaps
Something about the scraping of the shards
Will cure the itch — though not your itch of mind, sir. [*Aside.*
It shall be saved for you, and sent home. Good, sir.

This way for fear the lord should meet you

[*Exit* MAMMON.]

Sub. [*Raising his head.*] Face!

Face. Ay.

Sub. Is he gone?

Face. Yes, and as heavily

As all the gold he hoped for were in 's blood.

Let us be light, though.

Sub. [*Leaping up.*] Ay, as balls, and bound

And hit our heads against the roof for joy:

There's so much of our care now cast away.

Face. Now to our Don.

Sub. Yes, your young widow by this time

Is made a countess, Face; she has been in travail

Of a young heir for you.

Face. Good, sir.

Sub. Off with your case,

And greet her kindly, as a bridegroom should

After these common hazards.

Face. Very well, sir,

Will you go fetch Don Diego off the while?

Sub. And fetch him over too, if you'll be pleased, sir;

Would Dol were in her place, to pick his pockets now!

Face. Why, you can do't as well, if you would set to 't.

I pray you prove your virtue.

Sub. For your sake, sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter SURLY and DAME PLIANT.

Sur. Lady, you see into what hands you are fallen;
'Mongst what a nest of villains! and how near
Your honour was to have caught a certain flaw,
Through your credulity, had I but been
So punctually forward, as place, time,
And other circumstances would have made a man;
For you're a handsome woman: would you were wise too!
I am a gentleman come here disguised,
Only to find the knaveries of this citadel;
And where I might have wronged your honour, and have not,
I claim some interest in your love. You are,
They say, a widow, rich; and I'm a bachelor,
Worth nought: your fortunes may make me a man,
As mine have preserved you a woman. Think upon it,
And whether I have deserved you or no.

Dame P. I will, sir.

Sur. And for these household rogues, let me alone
To treat with them.

Enter SUBTLE.

Sub. How doth my noble Diego,
And my dear Madam Countess? Hath the Count
Been courteous, lady? liberal and open?
Donzel, methinks you look melancholic
After your interview, and scurvy: truly
I do not like the dulness of your eye;
It hath a heavy cast, 't is upsee Dutch,
And says you are a lumpish cavalier.
Be lighter, I will make your pockets so.

[*Attempts to pick them.*
Sur. [*Throws open his cloak.*] Will you, Don Bawd and
pick-purse? [*Strikes him down.*] How now! Reel you?
Stand up, sir; you shall find, since I am so heavy,
I'll give you equal weight.

Sub. Help! murder!

Sur. No, sir,
There's no such thing intended: a good cart
And a clean whip shall ease you of that fear.
I am the Spanish Don that should be cozen'd —
Do you see, cozen'd! Where's your Captain Face,
That parcel broker, and whole-bawd, all rascal!

Enter FACE in his uniform.

Face. How, Surly!

Sur. Oh, make your approach, good captain.
I have found from whence your copper rings and spoons
Come, now, wherewith you cheat abroad in taverns.
'Twas here you learned to anoint your boot with brimstone,
Then rub men's gold on 't for a kind of touch,
And say 'twas nought, when you had changed the colour,
That you might have it for nothing. And this doctor,
Your sooty, smoky-bearded compeer, he
Will close you so much gold, in a bolt's head,
And, on a turn, convey in the stead another
With sublimed mercury, that shall burst in the heat,
And fly out all "in fumo"! Then weeps Mammon;
Then swoons his worship. [*FACE slips out.*] Or, he is the
Faustus

That casteth figures and can conjure, cures
Plagues, piles, and pox, by the ephemerides,

And holds intelligence while you send in —
 Captain — what ! is he gone ? — damsels with child,
 Wives that are barren, or the waiting-maid
 With the green sickness. [*Seizes SUBTLE as he is retiring.*

Nay, sir, you must tarry,
 Though he be 'scaped, and answer by the ears, sir.

Re-enter FACE with KASTIL.

Face. Why, now's the time, if ever you will quarrel
 Well, as they say, and be a true-born child :
 The doctor and your sister both are abused.

Kas. Where is he ? Which is he ? He is a slave.
 Whate'er he is, and he must answer me. — Are you
 The man, sir, I would know ?

Sur. I should be loth, sir,
 To confess so much.

Kas. Then you lie in your throat.

Sur. How !

Face. [*To KASTIL.*] A very errant rogue, sir, and a cheater,
 Employed here by another conjurer,
 That does not love the doctor, and would cross him
 If he knew how.

Sur. Sir, you are abused.

Kas. You lie ;
 And 't is no matter.

Face. Well said, sir ! He is
 The impudentest rascal —

Sur. You are indeed : will you hear me, sir !

Face. By no means : bid him begone.

Kas. Begone, sir, quickly.

Sur. This is strange ! — Lady, do you inform your brother.

Face. There is not such a foist in all the town,
 The doctor had him presently ; and finds yet
 The Spanish Count will come here. — Bear up, Subtle. [*Aside.*

Sub. Yes, sir, he must appear within this hour.

Face. And yet this rogue would come in a disguise,
 By the temptation of another spirit,
 To trouble our art, though he could not hurt it !

Kas. Ay,
 I know — Away — [*to his sister*] — you talk like a foolish
 mauther.

Sur. Sir, all is truth she says.

Face. Do not believe him, sir.
 He is the lyingest swabber ! Come your ways, sir.

Sur. You are valiant out of company !

Kas. Yes ; how then, sir.

Enter DRUGGER, with a piece of damask.

Face. Nay, here's an honest fellow too, that knows him
And all his tricks. Make good what I say, Abel :
This cheater would have cozened thee o' the widow.

[*Aside to DRUG.*

He owes this honest Drugger here, seven pounds,
He has had on him, in twopen'orths of tobacco.

Drug. Yes, sir.

And he has damned himself three terms to pay me.

Face. And what does he owe for lotium?

Drug. Thirty shillings, sir ;
And for six syringes.

Sur. Hydra of villainy !

Face. Nay, sir ; you must quarrel him out o' the house.

Kas. I will :

— Sir, if you get not out o' doors you lie !

Sur. Why, this is madness, sir,

Not valour in you ; I must laugh at this.

Kas. It is my humour : you are a pimp and a trig,
And an Amadis de Gaul or a Don Quixote.

Drug. Or a knight o' the curious coxcomb, do you see?

Enter ANANIAS.

Ana. Peace to the household !

Kas. I'll keep peace for no man.

Ana. Casting of dollars is concluded lawful.

Kas. Is he the constable?

Sub. Peace, Ananias.

Face. No, sir.

Kas. Then you are an otter, a shad, a whit, a very tim.

Sur. You'll hear me, sir?

Kas. I will not.

Ana. What is the motive !

Sub. Zeal in the young gentleman
Against his Spanish slops.

Ana. They are profane,

Lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches.

Sur. New rascals !

Kas. Will you begone, sir?

Ana. Avoid, Satan !

Thou art not of the light : That ruff of pride
About thy neck betrays thee ; and is the same
With that which the unclean birds, in seventy-seven,

Were seen to prank it with on divers coasts :
Thou look'st like Antichrist, in that lewd hat.

Sur. I must give way.

Kas. Begone, sir.

Sur. But I'll take

A course with you ——

Ana. Depart, proud Spanish fiend !

Sur. Captain and Doctor.

Ana. Child of perdition !

Kas. Hence, sir !

[*Exit* *SURLY.*

Did I not quarrel bravely ?

Face. Yes, indeed, sir.

Kas. Nay, and I give my mind to 't, I shall do 't.

Face. Oh, you must follow, sir, and threaten him tame :
He'll turn again else.

Kas. I'll re-turn him then.

[*Exit.*

[*SUBTLE takes ANANIAS aside.*

Face. Druggier, this rogue prevented us for thee :
We had determined that thou should'st have come
In a Spanish suit, and have carried her so ; and he,
A brokerly slave ! goes, puts it on himself.
Hast brought the damask ?

Drug. Yes, sir.

Face. Thou must borrow

A Spanish suit : hast thou no credit with the players ?

Drug. Yes, sir ; did you never see me play the fool ?

Face. I know not, Nab : — Thou shalt, if I can help it. —

[*Aside.*

Hieronimo's old cloak, ruff, and hat will serve ;
I'll tell thee more when thou bring'st 'em. [*Exit* *DRUGGER.*

Ana. Sir, I know

The Spaniard hates the brethren, and hath spies
Upon their actions : and that this was one
I make no scruple. — But the holy synod
Have been in prayer and meditation for it ;
And 'tis revealed, no less to them than me,
That casting of money is most lawful.

Sub. True,

But here I can not do it ; if the house
Should chance to be suspected, all would out,
And we would be locked up in the Tower for ever,
To make gold there for the state, never come out ;
And then are you defeated.

Ana. I will tell

This to the elders and the weaker brethren,

That the whole company of the separation
May join in humble prayer again.

Sub. And fasting.

Ana. Yea, for some fitter place. The peace of mind
Rest with these walls !

[*Exit.*

Sub. Thanks, courteous Ananias.

Face. What did he come for?

Sub. About casting dollars,
Presently out of hand. And so I told him
A Spanish minister came here to spy
Against the faithful ——

Face. I conceive. Come, Subtle,
Thou art so down upon the least disaster !
How wouldst thou ha' done, if I had not helped thee out?

Sub. I thank thee, Face, for the angry boy, i' faith.

Face. Who would have looked it should have been that rascal
Surly? he had dyed his beard and all. Well, sir,
Here's damask come to make you a suit.

Sub. Where's Druggier?

Face. He is gone to borrow me a Spanish habit ;
I'll be the count, now.

Sub. But where's the widow?

Face. Within, with my lord's sister ; Madam Dol
Is entertaining her.

Sub. By your favour, Face,
Now she is honest, I will stand again.

Face. You will not offer it.

Sub. Why?

Face. Stand to your word,
Or —— here comes Dol, she knows ——

Sub. You are tyrannous still.

Enter DOL hastily.

Face. Strict for my right. — How now, Dol ! Hast told her,
The Spanish Count will come?

Dol. Yes ; but another is come
You little looked for !

Face. Who is that?

Dol. Your master ;
The master of the house.

Sub. How, Dol !

Face. She lies,
This is some trick. Come, leave your quiblings, Dorothy.

Dol. Look out and see. [FACE goes to the window.

Sub. Art thou in earnest?

Dol. 'Slight,

Forty o' the neighbours are about him, talking.

Face. 'T is he, by this good day.

Dol. 'T will prove ill day

For some on us.

Face. We are undone, and taken.

Dol. Lost, I'm afraid.

Sub. You said he would not come

While there died one a week within the liberties.

Face. No: 't was within the walls.

Sub. Was 't so! cry you mercy.

I thought the liberties. What shall we do now, Face?

Face. Be silent: not a word, if he call or knock,
I'll into mine own shape again and meet him,
Of Jeremy, the butler. In the meantime,
Do you two pack up all the goods and purchase
That we can carry in the two trunks. I'll keep him
Off for to-day, if I can not longer: and then
At night I'll ship you both away to Ratcliff,
Where we will meet to-morrow, and there we'll share.
Let Mammon's brass and pewter keep the cellar;
We'll have another time for that. But, Dol,
Prythee go heat a little water quickly;
Subtle must shave me: all my captain's beard
Must off, to make me appear smooth Jeremy.
You'll do it?

Sub. Yes, I'll shave you, as well as I can.

Face. And not cut my throat, but trim me?

Sub. You shall see, sir.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—BEFORE LOVEWIT'S DOOR

Enter LOVEWIT, with several of the Neighbours.

LOVE. Has there been such resort, say you?

First Nei. Daily, sir.

Second Nei. And nightly, too.

Third Nei. Ay, some as brave as lords.

Fourth Nei. Ladies and gentlewomen.

Fifth Nei. Citizens' wives.

First Nei. And knights.

Sixth Nei. In coaches.

Second Nei. Yes, and oyster women.

First Nei. Beside other gallants.

Third Nei. Sailors' wives.

Fourth Nei. Tobacco men.

Fifth Nei. Another Pimlico !

Love. What should my knave advance,
To draw this company? He hung out no banners
Of a strange calf with five legs to be seen,
Or a huge lobster with six claws?

Sixth Nei. No, sir.

Third Nei. We had gone in then, sir.

Love. He has no gift
Of teaching in the nose that e'er I knew of.
You saw no bills set up that promised cure
Of agues, or the toothache?

Second Nei. No such thing, sir.

Love. Nor heard a drum struck for baboons or puppets?

Fifth Nei. Neither, sir.

Love. What device should he bring forth now?
I love a teeming wit as I love my nourishment ;
'Pray God he have not kept such open house
That he hath sold my hangings and my bedding !
I left him nothing else. If he have eat them,
A plague o' the moth, say I ! Sure he has got
Some tempting pictures to call all this ging !
The friar and the nun ; or the new motion
Of the knight's courser and the parson's mare ;
The boy of six year old who is a man ;
Or 't may be he has the fleas that run at tilt
Upon a table, or some dog to dance.
When saw you him?

First Nei. Who, sir, Jeremy?

Second Nei. Jeremy Butler?

We saw him not this month.

Love. How !

Fourth Nei. Not these five weeks, sir.

Sixth Nei. These six weeks at the least.

Love. You amaze me, neighbours !

Fifth Nei. Sure, if your worship know not where he is,
He's slipped away.

Sixth Nei. Pray God, he be not made away.

Love. Ha ! it's no time to question, then.

[*Knocks at the door.*

Sixth Nei. About

Some three weeks since, I heard a doleful cry,
As I sat up a-mending my wife's stockings.

Love. 'Tis strange that none will answer! Didst thou hear
A cry, say'st thou?

Sixth Nei. Yes, sir, like unto a man
That had been strangled an hour, and could not speak.

Second Nei. I heard it too, just this day three weeks at two
o'clock

Next morning.

Love. These be miracles, or you make them so.
A man an hour strangled, and could not speak,
And both you heard him cry?

Third Nei. Yes, downward, sir?

Love. Thou art a wise fellow. Give me thy hand, I pray thee,
What trade art thou on?

Third Nei. A smith, an't please your worship.

Love. A smith! then lend me thy help to get this door open.

Third Nei. That I will presently, sir, but fetch my tools.

[*Exit.*

First Nei. Sir, best to knock again, afore you break it.

Love. [*Knocks again.*] I will.

Enter FACE in his butler's livery.

Face. What mean you, sir?

First, Second, Fourth Nei. Oh, here's Jeremy!

Face. Good, sir, come from the door.

Love. Why, what's the matter?

Face. Yet farther, you are too near yet.

Love. In the name of wonder,
What means the fellow!

Face. The house, sir, has been visited.

Love. What, with the plague? stand thou then farther.

Face. No, sir,
I had it not.

Love. Who had it then? I left
None else but thee in the house.

Face. Yes, sir, my fellow,
The cat that kept the buttery, had it on her
A week before I spied it: but I got her
Conveyed away in the night: and so I shut
The house up for a month——

Love. How!

Face. Purposing then, sir,
To have burnt rose-vinegar, treacle, and tar,
And have made it sweet, that you should ne'er have known it;

Because I knew the news would but afflict you, sir.

Love. Breathe less, and farther off ! Why this is stranger :
The neighbours tell me all here that the doors
Have still been open ——

Face. How, sir !

Love. Gallants, men and women,
And of all sorts, tag-rag, been seen to flock here
In thraves, these ten weeks, as to a second Hogsden,
In days of Pimlico and Eyebright.

Face. Sir,
Their wisdoms will not say so.

Love. To-day they speak
Of coaches and gallants ; one in a French hood
Went in, they tell me ; and another was seen
In a velvet gown at the window : divers more
Pass in and out.

Face. They did pass through the doors then,
Or walls, I assure their eyesights, and their spectacles ;
For here, sir, are the keys, and here have been,
In this my pocket, now above twenty days :
And for before, I kept the fort alone there.
But that 't is yet not deep in the afternoon,
I should believe my neighbours had seen double
Through the black pot, and made these apparitions !
For, on my faith to your worship, for these three weeks
And upwards the door has not been opened.

Love. Strange !

First Nei. Good faith, I think I saw a coach.

Second Nei. And I too,
I'd have been sworn.

Love. Do you but think it now ?
And but one coach ?

Fourth Nei. We can not tell, sir : Jeremy
Is a very honest fellow.

Face. Did you see me at all ?

First Nei. No ; that we are sure on.

Second Nei. I'll be sworn o' that.

Love. Fine rogues to have your testimonies built on !

Re-enter Third Neighbour, with his tools.

Third Nei. Is Jeremy come ?

First Nei. Oh, yes ; you may leave your tools.
We were deceived, he says.

Second Nei. He has had the keys ;
And the door has been shut these three weeks.

Third Nei. Like enough.

Love. Peace, and get hence, you changelings.

Enter SURLY and MAMMON.

Face. Surly come !

And Mammon made acquainted ! They'll tell all.

How shall I beat them off ? what shall I do ?

Nothing's more wretched than a guilty conscience.

[*Aside.*

Sur. No, sir, he was a great physician. This,

It was no evil house, but a mere chance !

You knew the Lord and his sister.

Mam. Nay, good Surly —

Sur. The happy word, BE RICH —

Mam. Play not the tyrant —

Sur. Should be to-day pronounced to all your friends.

And where be your andirons now ? and your brass pots,

That should have been golden flagons, and great wedges ?

Mam. Let me but breathe. What, they have shut their doors,
Methinks !

Sur. Ay, now 't is holiday with them. [He and SURLY knock.

Mam. Rogues,

Cozeners, rascals, cheats !

Face. What mean you, sir !

Mam. To enter if we can.

Face. Another man's house !

Here is the owner, sir ; turn you to him,

And speak your business.

Mam. Are you, sir, the owner ?

Love. Yes, sir.

Mam. And are those knaves within, your cheaters !

Love. What knaves, what cheaters ?

Mam. Subtle and his Lungs.

Face. The gentleman is distracted, sir ! No lungs,
Nor lights have been seen here these three weeks, sir,
Within these doors, upon my word.

Sur. Your word,

Groom, arrogant !

Face. Yes, sir, I am the housekeeper,
And know the keys have not been out of my hands.

Sur. This is a new Face.

Face. You do mistake the house, sir :
What sign was 't at ?

Sur. You rascal ? this is one
Of the confederacy. Come, let's get officers,
And force the door.

Love. Pray you, stay, gentlemen.

Sur. No, sir, we'll come with warrant.

Mam. Ay, and then

We shall have your doors open. [*Exeunt* MAM. and SUR.]

Love. What means this?

Face. I can not tell, sir.

First Nei. These are two of the gallants
That we do think we saw.

Face. Two of the fools!

You talk as idly as they. Good faith, sir,
I think the moon has crazed 'em all. Oh, me!

Enter KASTRIL.

The angry boy come too! He'll make a noise,
And ne'er away till he have betrayed us all. [*Aside.*]

Kas. [*Knocking.*] What rogues, cheats, slaves, you'll open
the door anon!

What, cockatrice, my suster! By this light
I'll fetch the marshal to you. You are a toad
To keep your castle —

Face. Who would you speak to, sir?

Kas. The dirty doctor and the cozening captain,
And puss my suster.

Love. This is something, sure.

Face. Upon my trust, the doors were never open, sir.

Kas. I have heard all their tricks told me twice over,
By the fat knight and the lean gentleman.

Love. Here comes another.

Enter ANANIAS and TRIBULATION.

Face. Ananias too!
And his pastor!

Tri. [*Beating at the door.*] The doors are shut against us.

Ana. Come forth, you seed of sulphur, sons of fire!
Your stench it is broke forth; abomination
Is in the house.

Kas. Ay, my suster's there.

Ana. The place,
It is become a cage of unclean birds.

Kas. Yes, I will fetch the scavenger and the constable.

Tri. You shall do well.

Ana. We'll join to weed them out.

Kas. You will not come, then, cockatrice, my suster?

Ana. Call her not sister.

Kas. I'll raise the street.

Love. Good gentleman, a word.

Ana. Satan avoid, and hinder not our zeal !

[*Exeunt ANA. and TRIB. and KAST.*]

Love. The world's turned Bethlem.

Face. These are all broke loose,
Out of St. Katherine's, where they used to keep
The better sort of mad-folks.

First Nei. All these persons
We saw go in and out here.

Second Nei. Yes, indeed, sir.

Third Nei. These were the parties.

Face. Peace, you drunkards ! Sir,
I wonder at it : please you to give me leave
To touch the door, I'll try an the lock be changed.

Love. It amazes me !

Face. [*Goes to the door.*] Good faith, sir, I believe
There's no such thing : 'tis all *deceptio visus* —
Would I could get him away.

[*Aside.*]

Dap. [*Within.*] Master Captain ! Master Doctor !

Love. Who's that ?

Face. Our clerk within, that I forgot ! [*Aside.*] I know not,
sir.

Dap. [*Within.*] For God's sake, when will her grace be at
leisure ?

Face. Ha !

Illusions, some spirit o' the air ! His gag is melted,
And now he sets out the throat.

[*Aside.*]

Dap. [*Within.*] I am almost stifled —

Face. Would you were altogether.

[*Aside.*]

Love. 'Tis in the house.

Ha ! list.

Face. Believe it, sir, in the air.

Love. Peace, you.

Dap. [*Within.*] Mine aunt's grace does not use me well.

Sub. [*Within.*] You fool,

Peace, you'll mar all.

Face. [*Speaks through the key-hole, while LOVEWIT advances
to the door unobserved.*] Or you will else, you rogue.

Love. Oh, is it so ? Then you converse with spirits !
Come, sir. No more of your tricks, good Jeremy.
The truth, the shortest way.

Face. Dismiss this rabble, sir —

What shall I do ? I am caught.

[*Aside.*]

Love. Good neighbours,
I thank you all. You may depart. [*Exeunt Neighbours.*] Come, sir,

You know that I am an indulgent master,
And therefore conceal nothing. What's your medicine,
To draw so many several sorts of wild-fowl?

Face. Sir, you were wont to affect mirth and wit,
But here's no place to talk on 't in the street.
Give me but leave to make the best of my fortune,
And only pardon me the abuse of your house :
It's all I beg. I'll help you to a widow,
In recompense, that you shall give me thanks for,
Will make you seven years younger, and a rich one.
'Tis but your putting on a Spanish cloak :
I have her within. You need not fear the house ;
It was not visited.

Love. But by me, who came
Sooner than you expected.

Face. It is true, sir.
Pray you, forgive me.

Love. Well : let's see your widow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter SUBTLE, leading in DAPPER, with his eyes bound as before.

Sub. How ! have you eaten your gag ?

Dap. Yes, faith, it crumbled
Away in my mouth.

Sub. You have spoiled all, then.

Dap. No !
I hope my aunt of Fairy will forgive me.

Sub. Your aunt's a gracious lady ; but in troth
You were to blame.

Dap. The fume did overcome me,
And I did do 't to stay my stomach. Pray you,
So satisfy her grace.

Enter FACE in his uniform.

Here comes the Captain,

Face. How now ! Is his mouth down ?

Sub. Ay, he has spoken !

Face. A plague, I heard him, and you too. He's undone then.
I have been fain to say the house is haunted
With spirits, to keep churl back.

Sub. And hast thou done it ?

Face. Sure, for this night.

Sub. Why, then triumph and sing

Of Face so famous, the precious king
Of present wits.

Face. Did you not hear the coil
About the door?

Sub. Yes, and I dwindled with it.

Face. Show him his aunt, and let him be despatched ;
I'll send her to you. [*Exit FACE.*]

Sub. Well, sir, your aunt her grace
Will give you audience presently, on my suit,
And the captain's word that you did not eat your gag
In any contempt of her highness. [*Unbinds his eyes.*]

Dap. Not I, in troth, sir.

Enter DOL like the Queen of Fairy.

Sub. Here she is come. Down o' your knees and wriggle :
She has a stately presence. [*DAPPER kneels, and shuffles to-
wards her.*] Good ! Yet nearer,
And bid God save you !

Dap. Madam !

Sub. And your aunt.

Dap. And my most gracious aunt, God save your grace.

Dol. Nephew, we thought to have been angry with you ;
But that sweet face of yours hath turned the tide,
And made it flow with joy, that ebb'd of love.
Arise, and touch our velvet gown.

Sub. The skirts,
And kiss 'em. So !

Dol. Let me now stroke that head.
Much, nephew, shalt thou win, much shalt thou spend,
Much shalt thou give away, much shalt thou lend.

Sub. Ay, much indeed ! [*Aside.*] Why do you not thank
her grace ?

Dap. I can not speak for joy.

Sub. See the kind wretch !
Your grace's kinsman right.

Dol. Give me the bird.
Here is your fly in a purse, about your neck, cousin ;
Wear it, and feed it about this day seven-night,
On your right wrist —

Sub. Open a vein with a pin,
And let it suck but once a week ; till then
You must not look on 't.

Dol. No : and, kinsman,
Bear yourself worthy of the blood you come on.

Sub. Her grace would have you eat no more Woolsack pies,
Nor Dagger frumerty.

Dol. Nor break his fast
In heaven and hell.

Sub. She's with you everywhere !
Nor play with costermongers at mum-chance, tray-trip.
God make you rich (when as your aunt has done it) ;
But keep
The gallant'st company and the best games ——

Dap. Yes, sir.

Sub. Gleeck and primero : and what you get, be true to us.

Dap. By this hand, I will.

Sub. You may bring 's a thousand pounds
Before to-morrow night, if but three thousand
Be stirring, an you will.

Dap. I swear I will, then.

Sub. Your fly will learn you all games.

Face. [*Within.*] Have you done there ?

Sub. Your grace will command him no more duties ?

Dol. No ?

But come and see me often. I may chance
To leave him three or four hundred chests of treasure,
And some twelve thousand acres of Fairyland,
If he game well and comely with good gamesters.

Sub. There's a kind aunt ! Kiss her departing part.
But you must sell your forty marks a-year, now.

Dap. Ay, sir, I mean.

Sub. Or give 't away ; plague on 't !

Dap. I'll give 't mine aunt : I'll go and fetch the writings.

[*Exit.*

Sub. 'Tis well — away !

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Where's Subtle ?

Sub. Here : what news ?

Face. Drugger is at the door ; go take his suit,
And bid him fetch a parson, presently :

Say he shall marry the widow. Thou shalt spend
A hundred pounds by the service !

[*Exit* SUTLE.

Now, Queen Dol,
Have you packed up all ?

Dol. Yes.

Face. And how do you like
The Lady Pliant ?

Dol. A good dull innocent.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

Sub. Here's your Hieronymus' cloak and hat.

Face. Give me them.

Sub. And the ruff too?

Face. Yes; I'll come to you presently.

[*Exit.*

Sub. Now he is gone about his project, Dol,
I told you of, for the widow.

Dol. 'Tis direct
Against our articles.

Sub. Well, we will fit him, wench.
Hast thou gulled her of her jewels or her bracelets?

Dol. No; but I will do 't.

Sub. Soon at night, my Dolly,
When we are shipped, and all our goods aboard,
Eastward for Ratcliff; we will turn our course
To Brainford, westward, if thou say'st the word,
And take our leaves of this o'er-weening rascal,
This peremptory Face.

Dol. Content, I'm weary of him.

Sub. Thou'st cause, when the slave will run a-wiving, Dol,
Against the instrument that was drawn between us.

Dol. I'll pluck his bird as bare as I can.

Sub. Yes, tell her
She must by any means address some present
To the cunning man, make him amends for wronging
His art with her suspicion; send a ring
Or chain of pearl: she will be tortured else
Extremely in her sleep, say, and have strange things
Come to her. Wilt thou?

Dol. Yes.

Sub. My fine flitter-mouse,
My bird o' the night! we'll tickle it at the Pigeons,
When we have all, and may unlock the trunks,
And say, this is mine, and thine; and thine, and mine.

[*They kiss.*

Re-enter FACE.

Face. What now! a-billing?

Sub. Yes, a little exalted
In the good passage of our stock-affairs.

Face. Druggier has brought his parson; take him in, Subtle,
And send Nab back again to wash his face.

Sub. I will: and shave himself.

[*Exit.*

Face. If you can get him.

Dol. You are hot upon it, Face, whate'er it is!

Face. A trick that Dol shall spend ten pounds a month by.

Re-enter SUTLE.

Is he gone?

Sub. The chaplain waits you in the hall, sir.

Face. I'll go bestow him.

[*Exit.*

Dol. He'll now marry her, instantly.

Sub. He can not yet, he is not ready. Dear Dol,
Cozen her of all thou canst. To deceive him
Is no deceit, but justice, that would break
Such an inextricable tie as ours was.

Dol. Let me alone to fit him.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Come, my venturers,
You have packed up all? Where be the trunks? Bring forth.

Sub. Here.

Face. Let us see them. Where's the money?

Sub. Here,

In this.

Face. Mammon's ten pounds; eight score before:
The brethren's money this. Drugger's and Dapper's.
What paper's that?

Dol. The jewel of the waiting-maid's,
That stole it from her lady, to know certain ——

Face. If she should have precedence of her mistress?

Dol. Yes.

Face. What box is that?

Sub. The fish-wives' rings, I think,
And the ale-wives' single money. Is 't not Dol?

Dol. Yes; and the whistle that the sailor's wife
Brought you to know an her husband were with Ward.

Face. We'll wet it to-morrow; and our silver-beakers
And tavern cups. Where be the French petticoats,
And girdles and hangers?

Sub. Here, in the trunk,
And the bolts of lawn.

Face. Is Drugger's damask there,
And the tobacco?

Sub. Yes.

Face. Give me the keys.

Dol. Why you the keys?

Sub. No matter, Dol; because
We shall not open them before he comes.

Dol. No!

Face. No, my smock rampart. The right is, my master
Knows all, has pardoned me, and he will keep them;
Doctor, 'tis true — you look — for all your figures:
I sent for him indeed. Wherefore, good partners,
Both he and she be satisfied: for here
Determines the indenture tripartite
'Twixt Subtle, Dol, and Face. All I can do
Is to help you over the wall, o' the back-side,
Or lend you a sheet to save your velvet gown, Dol.
Here will be officers presently, bethink you
Of some course suddenly to escape the dock:
For thither you will come else. — [*Loud knocking.*] — Hark you,
thunder.

Sub. You are a precious fiend!

Offi. [*Without.*] Open the door.

Face. Dol, I am sorry for thee, i' faith; but hear'st thou?
It shall go hard but I will place thee somewhere:
Thou shalt have my letter to Mistress Amo ——

Dol. Hang you!

Face. Or Madame Cæsarean.

Dol. Out upon you, rogue!

Would I had but time to beat thee!

Face. Subtle,

Let's know where you set up next; I will send you
A customer now and then, for old acquaintance:
What new course have you?

Sub. Rogue, I'll hang myself,

That I may walk a greater devil than thou,
And haunt thee in the flock-bed and the buttery. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — AN OUTER ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter LOVEWIT in the Spanish dress, with the Parson.

[*Loud knocking at the door.*]

Love. What do you mean, my masters?

Mam. [*Without.*] Open your door,
Cheaters, thieves, conjurors.

Offi. [*Without.*] Or we will break it open.

Love. What warrant have you?

Offi. [*Without.*] Warrant enough, sir, doubt not,
If you'll not open it.

Love. Is there an officer, there?

Offi. [*Without.*] Yes, two or three for failing.

Love. Have but patience,
And I will open it straight.

Enter FACE as butler.

Face. Sir, have you done?
Is it a marriage? perfect?

Love. Yes, my brain.

Face. Off with your ruff and cloak then; be yourself, sir.

Sur. [*Without.*] Down with the door.

Kas. [*Without.*] 'Slight, ding it open.

Love. [*Opening the door.*] Hold,
Hold, gentlemen, what means this violence?

MAMMON, SURLY, KASTRIL, ANANIAS, TRIBULATION, and Officers
rush in.

Mam. Where is this collier?

Sur. And my Captain Face?

Mam. These day owls

Sur. That are birding in men's purses.

Mam. Madam Suppository.

Kas. Doxy, my suster.

Ana. Locusts

Of the foul pit.

Tri. Profane as Bel and the Dragon.

Ana. Worse than the grasshoppers or the lice of Egypt.

Love. Good gentlemen, hear me. Are you officers,
And can not stay this violence?

First Off. Keep the peace.

Love. Gentlemen, what is the matter? Whom do you seek?

Mam. The chemical cozener.

Sur. And the captain pander.

Kas. The nun, my suster.

Mam. Madam Rabbi.

Ana. Scorpions

And caterpillars.

Love. Fewer at once, I pray you.

Second Off. One after another, gentlemen, I charge you,
By virtue of my staff.

Ana. They are the vessels
Of pride, lust, and the cart.

Love. Good zeal, lie still

A little while.

Tri. Peace, Deacon Ananias.

Love. The house is mine here, and the doors are open.
If there be any such persons as you seek for,

Use your authority, search on, o' God's name.
 I am but newly come to town, and finding
 This tumult 'bout my door, to tell you true,
 It somewhat 'mazed me; till my man here, fearing
 My more displeasure, told me he had done
 Somewhat an insolent part, let out my house
 (Belike, presuming on my known aversion
 From any air o' the town while there was sickness)
 To a doctor and a captain: who, what are they,
 Or where they be, he knows not.

Mam. Are they gone?

Love. You may go in and search, sir. [MAMMON, ANA. and
 TRIB. go in.] Here, I find

The empty walls worse than I left them, smoked,
 A few cracked pots and glasses, and a furnace:
 The ceiling filled with poesies of the candle.
 Only one gentlewoman, I met here,
 That is within, that said she was a widow——

Kas. Ay, that's my suster; I'll go thump her. Where is she?
 [Goes in.]

Love. And should have married a Spanish count, but he,
 When he came to 't, neglected her so grossly,
 That I, a widower, am gone through with her.

Sur. How! have I lost her then?

Love. Were you the don, sir?

Good faith, now, she does blame you extremely, and says
 You swore, and told her you had taken the pains
 To dye your beard, and umbre o'er your face,
 Borrowed a suit, and ruff, all for her love;
 And then did nothing. What an oversight,
 And want of putting forward, sir, was this!
 Well fare an old harquebuzier, yet,
 Could prime his powder, and give fire, and hit,
 All in a twinkling!

Re-enter MAMMON.

Mam. The whole nest are fled!

Love. What sort of birds were they?

Mam. A kind of choughs,

Or thievish daws, sir, that have pick'd my purse
 Of eight score and ten pounds within these five weeks,
 Beside my first materials; and my goods,
 That lie in the cellar, which I am glad they have left,
 I may have home yet.

Love. Think you so, sir?

Mam. Ay.

Love. By order of law, sir, but not otherwise.

Mam. Not mine own stuff!

Love. Sir, I can take no knowledge
That they are yours, but by public means.
If you can bring certificate that you were gull'd of them,
Or any formal writ out of a court,
That you did cozen yourself, I will not hold them.

Mam. I'll rather lose them.

Love. That you shall not, sir,
By me, in troth: upon these terms, they are yours.
What! should they have been, sir, turn'd into gold, all?

Mam. No,
I can not tell — It may be they should — What then?

Love. What a great loss in hope have you sustain'd!

Mam. Not I, the commonwealth has.

Face. Ay, he would have built
The city new; and made a ditch about it
Of silver, should have run with cream from Hogsden;
That, every Sunday, in Moorfields, the youngers,
And tits and tom-boys should have fed on, gratis.

Mam. I will go mount a turnip-cart, and preach
The end of the world, within these two months. Surly,
What! in a dream?

Sur. Must I needs cheat myself
With that same foolish vice of honesty!
Come, let us go and hearken out the rogues:
That Face I'll mark for mine, if e'er I meet him.

Face. If I can hear of him, sir, I'll bring you word,
Unto your lodging; for in troth, they were strangers
To me, I thought them honest as myself, sir.

[*Exeunt MAM. and SUR.*]

Re-enter ANANIAS and TRIBULATION.

Tri. 'Tis well, the saints shall not lose all yet. Go,
And get some carts —

Love. For what, my zealous friends?

Ana. To bear away the portion of the righteous
Out of this den of thieves.

Love. What is that portion?

Ana. The goods sometimes the orphan's, that the brethren
Bought with their silver pence.

Love. What, those in the cellar,
The knight, Sir Mammon, claims?

Ana. I do defy

The wicked Mammon, so do all the brethren,
 Thou profane man ! I ask thee with what conscience
 Thou canst advance that idol against us,
 That have the seal ? were not the shillings number'd,
 That made the pounds ; were not the pounds told out,
 Upon the second day of the fourth week,
 In the eighth month, upon the table dormant,
 The year of the last patience of the saints,
 Six hundred and ten ?

Love. Mine earnest vehement botcher,
 And deacon also, I can not dispute with you :
 But if you get you not away the sooner,
 I shall confute you with a cudgel,

Ana. Sir !

Tri. Be patient, Ananias.

Ana. I am strong,
 And will stand up, well girt, against an host
 That threaten Gad in exile.

Love. I shall send you
 To Amsterdam, to your cellar.

Ana. I will pray there,
 Against thy house : may dogs defile thy walls,
 And wasps and hornets breed beneath thy roof,
 This seat of falsehood, and this cave of cozenage !

[*Exeunt ANA. and TRIB.*]

Enter DRUGGER.

Love. Another too ?

Drug. Not I, sir, I am no brother.

Love. [*Beats him.*] Away, you Harry Nicholas ! do you talk ?
 [*Exit DRUG.*]

Face. No, this was Abel Drugger. Good sir, go,
 [*To the PARSON.*]

And satisfy him ; tell him all is done :
 He staid too long a-washing of his face.
 The doctor, he shall hear of him at West-chester ;
 And of the captain, tell him, at Yarmouth, or
 Some good port-town else, lying for a wind. [*Exit PARSON.*]
 If you can get off the angry child, now, sir —

Enter KASTRIL dragging in his sister.

Kas. Come on, you ewe, you have match'd most sweetly, have
 you not ?

'Slight, you are a mammet ! O, I could touse you, now.
 Death, mun' you marry, with a plague !

Love. You lie, boy ;
As sound as you ; and I'm aforehand with you.

Kas. Anon !

Love. Come, will you quarrel ? I will feize you, sirrah ;
Why do you not buckle to your tools ?

Kas. Od's light,
This is a fine old boy as e'er I saw !

Love. What, do you change your copy now ? proceed,
Here stands my dove : stoop at her, if you dare.

Kas. 'Slight, I must love him ! I can not choose, i' faith,
And I should be hang'd for 't ! Suster, I protest,
I honour thee for this match.

Love. O, do you so, sir ?

Kas. Yes, and thou canst take tobacco and drink, old boy,
I'll give her five hundred pound more to her marriage
Than her own state.

Love. Fill a pipe full, Jeremy.

Face. Yes ; but go in and take it, sir.

Love. We will —
I will be ruled by thee in anything, Jeremy.

Kas. 'Slight, thou art not hide-bound, thou art a jovy boy !
Come, let us in, I pray thee, and take our whiffs.

Love. Whiff in with your sister, brother boy.

[*Exeunt KAS. and Dame P.*] That master
That hath received such happiness by a servant,
In such a widow, and with so much wealth,
Were very ungrateful, if he would not be
A little indulgent to that servant's wit,
And help his fortune, though with some small strain
Of his own candour. [*Advancing.*] — Therefore, gentlemen,
And kind spectators, if I have outstript
An old man's gravity, or strict canon, think
What a young wife and a good brain may do ;
Stretch age's truth sometimes, and crack it too.
Speak for thyself, knave.

Face. So I will, sir. [*Advancing to the front of the stage.*]
Gentlemen,

My part a little fell in this last scene,
Yet 't was decorum. And though I am clean
Got off from Subtle, Surly, Mammon, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Drugger, all
With whom I traded : yet I put myself
On you that are my country : and this pelf,
Which I have got, if you do quit me, rests
To feast you often, and invite new guests.

[*Exeunt.*]





JOHN FLETCHER

From an engraving by George Vertue

**THE
FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS**

**BY
JOHN FLETCHER**

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER was the name of the most famous of literary firms — Francis Beaumont (1584–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625). They wrote some plays in collaboration, and each wrote some alone; and no editor has been able to classify them completely. In their partnership, which lasted from about 1607 till the death of Beaumont, they lived in the same house and had even their clothes in common. Fletcher was a son of the Dean of Peterborough, and was a native of Rye, Sussex. He was educated at Cambridge, and about the time of his graduation, in 1597, his father's death left him in poverty. He produced one play, "The Woman-hater," before his partnership with Beaumont. After the death of Beaumont he collaborated with Massinger, Rowley, and Shirley, and he also assisted Shakespeare in the composition of "The Two Noble Kinsmen," and probably in "Henry the Eighth." He died of the plague in August, 1625. The entire works attributed to Beaumont and Fletcher include fifty-two plays, a masque, and a few minor poems. The masque and all the poems except one were the work of Beaumont alone. Eighteen plays are attributed to Fletcher alone, beginning with "The Loyal Subject" (1618) and ending with "The Noble Gentleman" (1626). Of these, "The Faithful Shepherdess," produced at some date before 1610, is believed to have been unsuccessful on its first representation; but it was revived in 1633, and was played before the Court and at Blackfriars Theatre. Thirty years later Pepys wrote of it in his diary: "A most simple thing, and yet much thronged after, and often shown, but it is only for the scene's sake, which is very fine indeed and worth seeing." Ben Jonson wrote these lines on "The Faithful Shepherdess":

"The wise and many-headed bench, that sits
Upon the life and death of plays and wits,
(Composed of gamester, captain, knight, knight's man,
Lady or pusill,¹ that wears mask² or fan,
Velvet or taffata cap, cauked in the dark
With the shop's foreman, or some such brave spark,
That may judge for his sixpence) had, before
They saw it half, damned the whole play and more:
Their motives were, since it had not to do
With vices, which they looked for and came to.
I, that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,
And wish that all the Muses blood were spilt
In such a martyrdom, to vex their eyes,
Do crown thy murdered poem: which shall rise
A glorified work to time, when fire
Or moths shall eat what all these fools admire."

¹ Fr. *pucelle*.

² Masks were worn by women in theatres till the middle of the eighteenth century.

TO THAT NOBLE AND TRUE LOVER OF LEARNING,

SIR WALTER ASTON,¹

KNIGHT OF THE BATH

SIR, I must ask your patience and be true;
This play was never liked, unless by few
That brought their judgments with 'em; for, of late,
First the infection, then the common prate
Of common people, have such customs got,
Either to silence plays or like them not:
Under the last of which this interlude
Had fallen for ever, pressed down by the rude,
That like a torrent, which the moist south feeds,
Drowns both before him the ripe corn and weeds,
Had not the saving sense of better men
Redeemed it from corruption. Dear sir, then,
Among the better souls, be you the best,
In whom, as in a centre, I take rest
And proper being; from whose equal eye
And judgment nothing grows but purity.
Nor do I flatter, for, by all those dead,
Great in the Muses, by Apollo's head,
He that adds anything to you, 't is done
Like his that lights a candle to the sun:
Then be, as you were ever, yourself still,
Moved by your judgment, not by love or will;
And when I sing again (as who can tell
My next devotion to that holy well?),
Your goodness to the Muses shall be all
Able to make a work heroical.

Given to your service,

JOHN FLETCHER.

¹ One of the first created baronets, made a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of James I.

TO THE INHERITOR OF ALL WORTHINESS

SIR WILLIAM SCIPWITH :

ODE

If, from servile hope or love,
I may prove
But so happy to be thought for
Such a one, whose greatest ease
Is to please,
Worthy sir, I've all I sought for :

For no itch of greater name,
Which some claim
By their verses, do I show it
To the world; nor to protest
'T is the best; —
These are lean faults in a poet ; —

Nor to make it serve to feed
At my need,
Nor to gain acquaintance by it,
Nor to ravish kind attorneys
In their journies
Nor to read it after diet.

Far from me are all these aims,
Fittest frames
To build weakness on and pity.
Only to yourself and such
Whose true touch
Makes all good, let me seem witty.

The admirer of your virtues,

JOHN FLETCHER.

: Celebrated among his friends for his witty conceits in making fit and acute epigrams, poesies, mottoes, and devices. — *Burton*.

TO THE PERFECT GENTLEMAN

SIR ROBERT TOWNSHEND :

If the greatest faults may crave
Pardon where contrition is,
Noble sir, I need must have
A long one for a long amiss.²
If you ask me, how is this?
 Upon my faith, I'll tell you frankly,
 You love above my means to thank ye.

Yet, according to my talent,
As sour fortune loves to use me,
A poor shepherd I have sent
In home-spun gray for to excuse me;
And may all my hopes refuse me,
 But when better comes ashore,
 You shall have better, newer, more!

Till when, like our desperate debtors,
Or our three-piled³ sweet protesters,
I must please you in bare letters,
And so pay my debts, like jesters;
Yet I oft have seen good feasters,
 Only for to please the pallet,
 Leave great meat and choose a sallet.

All yours,

JOHN FLETCHER.

¹ Youngest son of Sir Roger Townshend, ancestor of the present noble family of that name. He was a member of all parliaments from the Forty-second Elizabeth to the last of James I.

² A fault of long continuance. — *Dyce*.

³ Wearers of the finest velvet.

TO THE READER

If you be not reasonably assured of your knowledge in this kind of poem, lay down the book, or read this, which I would wish had been the prologue. It is a pastoral tragi-comedy, which the people seeing when it was played, having ever had a singular gift in defining, concluded to be a play of country hired shepherds in gray cloaks, with curtailed dogs in strings, sometimes laughing together, and sometimes killing one another; and, missing Whitsun-ales, cream, wassail, and morris-dances, began to be angry. In their error I would not have you fall, lest you incur their censure. Understand, therefore, a pastoral to be a representation of shepherds and shepherdesses with their actions and passions, which must be such as may agree with their natures, at least not exceeding former fictions and vulgar traditions; they are not to be adorned with any art, but such improper ones as nature is said to bestow, as singing and poetry; or such as experience may teach them, as the virtues of herbs and fountains, the ordinary course of the sun, moon, and stars, and such like. But you are ever to remember shepherds to be such as all the ancient poets, and modern, of understanding, have received them; that is, the owners of flocks, and not hirelings. A tragi-comedy is not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy, which must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life be questioned; so that a god is as lawful in this as in a tragedy, and mean people as in a comedy. Thus much I hope will serve to justify my poem, and make you understand it; to teach you more for nothing, I do not know that I am in conscience bound.

JOHN FLETCHER.

: Common.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PERIGOT, a Shepherd in love with Amoret.

THENOT, a Shepherd in love with Clorin.

DAPHNIS, a Modest Shepherd.

ALEXIS, a Wanton Shepherd.

Sullen Shepherd.

Old Shepherd.

Priest of Pan.

God of the River.

Satyr.

Shepherds.

AMORET, the Faithful Shepherdess in love with Perigot.

CLORIN, a Holy Shepherdess.

AMARILLIS, a Shepherdess in love with Perigot.

CLOE, a Wanton Shepherdess.

Shepherdesses.

SCENE — THESSALY

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS

ACT I

SCENE I.—THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER

Enter CLORIN.

CLORIN. Hail, holy earth, whose cold arms do embrace
The truest man that ever fed his flocks
By the fat plains of fruitful Thessaly !
Thus I salute thy grave ; thus do I pay
My early vows and tribute of mine eyes
To thy still-lovèd ashes ; thus I free
Myself from all ensuing heats and fires
Of love ; all sports, delights, and jolly games,
That shepherds hold full dear, thus put I off :
Now no more shall these smooth brows be begirt
With youthful coronals, and lead the dance ;
No more the company of fresh fair maids
And wanton shepherds be to me delightful,
Nor the shrill pleasing sound of merry pipes
Under some shady dell, when the cool wind
Plays on the leaves : all be far away,
Since thou art far away, by whose dear side
How often have I sat crowned with fresh flowers
For summer's queen, whilst every shepherd's boy
Puts on his lusty green, with gaudy hook,
And hanging scrip of finest cordevan.¹
But thou art gone, and these are gone with thee,
And all are dead but thy dear memory ;
That shall outlive thee, and shall ever spring,
Whilst there are pipes or jolly shepherds sing.
And here will I, in honour of thy love,
Dwell by thy grave, forgetting all those joys
That former times made precious to mine eyes ;
Only remembering what my youth did gain

¹ Spanish leather.

In the dark, hidden virtuous use of herbs :
 That will I practise, and as freely give
 All my endeavours as I gained them free.
 Of all green wounds I know the remedies
 In men or cattle, be they stung with snakes,
 Or charmed with powerful words of wicked art,
 Or be they love-sick, or through too much heat
 Grown wild or lunatic, their eyes or ears
 Thickened with misty film of dulling rheum ;
 These I can cure, such secret virtue lies
 In herbs applièd by a virgin's hand.
 My meat shall be what these wild woods afford,
 Berries and chesnuts, plantains, on whose cheeks
 The sun sits smiling, and the lofty fruit
 Pulled from the fair head of the straight-grown pine ;
 On these I'll feed with free content, and rest,
 When night shall blind the world, by thy side blest.

Enter SATYR with a Basket of Fruit.

Sat. Through yon same bending plain,
 That flings his arms down to the main,
 And through these thick woods, have I run,
 Whose bottom never kissed the sun
 Since the lusty spring began ;
 All to please my master Pan,
 Have I trotted without rest
 To get him fruit ; for at a feast
 He entertains, this coming night,
 His paramour, the Syrinx bright. —
 But, behold, a fairer sight ! [*Seeing CLORIN, he stands amazed.*
 By that heavenly form of thine,
 Brightest fair, thou art divine,
 Sprung from great immortal race
 Of the gods ; for in thy face
 Shines more awful majesty
 Than dull weak mortality
 Dare with misty eyes behold,
 And live : therefore on this mould
 Lowly do I bend my knee
 In worship of thy deity.
 Deign it, goddess, from my hand
 To receive whate'er this land
 From her fertile womb doth send
 Of her choice fruits ; and but lend
 Belief to that the Satyr tells :

Fairer by the famous wells
To this present day ne'er grew,
Never better nor more true.
Here be grapes, whose lusty blood
Is the learned poets' good,
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown
Than the squirrel's teeth that crack them ;
Deign, O fairest fair, to take them !
For these black-eyed Dryope
Hath oftentimes commanded me
With my clasped knee to climb :
See how well the lusty time
Hath decked their rising cheeks in red,
Such as on your lips is spread !
Here be berries for a queen,
Some be red, some be green ;
These are of that luscious meat,
The great god Pan himself doth eat :
All these, and what the woods can yield,
The hanging mountain or the field,
I freely offer, and ere long
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong ;
Till when, humbly leave I take,
Lest the great Pan do awake,
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,
Under a broad beech's shade.
I must go, I must run
Swifter than the fiery sun.

[Exit.

Clo. And all my fears go with thee !
What greatness, or what private hidden power,
Is there in me, to draw submission
From this rude man and beast ? Sure I am mortal,
The daughter of a shepherd ; he was mortal,
And she that bore me mortal : prick my hand,
And it will bleed ; a fever shakes me, and
The self-same wind that makes the young lambs shrink
Makes me a-cold : my fear says I am mortal.
Yet I have heard (my mother told it me,
And now I do believe it), if I keep
My virgin-flower uncropt, pure, chaste, and fair,
No goblin, wood-god, fairy, elf, or fiend,
Satyr, or other power that haunts the groves,
Shall hurt my body, or by vain illusion
Draw me to wander after idle fires ;

Or a wanton verse be spoken
In a shepherdess's ear :
Go your ways, ye are all clear.

[*They rise and sing.*

Sing his praises that doth keep
Our flocks from harm,
Pan, the father of our sheep ;
And arm in arm
Tread we softly in a round,
Whilst the hollow neighbouring ground
Fills the music with her sound.

Pan, O great god Pan, to thee
Thus do we sing !
Thou that keep'st us chaste and free
As the young spring ;
Ever be thy honour spoke,
From that place the Morn is broke
To that place Day doth unyoke !

[*Exeunt all except PERIGOT and AMORET.*

Peri. [*Detaining her.*] Stay, gentle Amoret, thou fair-browed
maid ;

Thy shepherd prays thee stay, that holds thee dear,
Equal to his soul's good.

Amo. Speak ; I give
Thee freedom, shepherd ; and thy tongue be still
The same it ever was, as free from ill
As he whose conversation never knew
The court or city ; be thou ever true !

Peri. When I fall off from my affection,
Or mingle my clean thoughts with foul desires,
First, let our great god cease to keep my flocks,
That, being left alone without a guard,
The wolf, or winter's rage, summer's great heat
And want of water, rots, or what to us
Of ill is yet unknown, fall speedily,
And in their general ruin let me go !

Amo. I pray thee, gentle shepherd, wish not so :
I do believe thee ; 't is as hard for me
To think thee false, and harder, than for thee
To hold me foul.

Peri. Oh, you are fairer far
Than the chaste blushing morn, or that fair star
That guides the wandering seaman through the deep ;

Straighter than straightest pine upon the steep
Head of an aged mountain ; and more white
Than the new milk we strip before daylight
From the full-freighted bags of our fair flocks ;
Your hair more beauteous than those hanging locks
Of young Apollo !

Amo. Shepherd, be not lost ;
You are sailed too far already from the coast
Of your discourse.

Peri. Did you not tell me once
I should not love alone, I should not lose
Those many passions, vows, and holy oaths,
I have sent to heaven ? did you not give your hand,
Even that fair hand, in hostage ? Do not, then,
Give back again those sweets to other men,
You yourself vowed were mine.

Amo. Shepherd, so far as maiden's modesty
May give assurance, I am once more thine,
Once more I give my hand : be ever free
From that great foe to faith, foul jealousy !

Peri. I take it as my best good ; and desire,
For stronger confirmation of our love,
To meet this happy night in that fair grove,
Where all true shepherds have rewarded been
For their long service : say, sweet, shall it hold ?

Amo. Dear friend, you must not blame me, if I make
A doubt of what the silent night may do,
Coupled with this day's heat, to move your blood :
Maids must be fearful. Sure you have not been
Washed white enough, for yet I see a stain
Stick in your liver : go and purge again.

Peri. Oh, do not wrong my honest simple truth !
Myself and my affections are as pure
As those chaste flames that burn before the shrine
Of the great Dian : only my intent
To draw you thither was to plight our troths,
With interchange of mutual chaste embraces,
And ceremonious tying of our souls.
For to that holy wood is consecrate
A virtuous well, about whose flowery banks
The nimble-footed fairies dance their rounds
By the pale moonshine, dipping oftentimes
Their stolen children, so to make them free
From dying flesh and dull mortality :
By this fair fount hath many a shepherd sworn,

And given away his freedom, many a troth
Been plight, which neither envy nor old time
Could ever break, with many a chaste kiss given,
In hope of coming happiness ;
By this fresh fountain many a blushing maid
Hath crowned the head of her long-lovèd shepherd
With gaudy flowers, whilst he happy sung
Lays of his love and dear captivity ;
There grow all herbs fit to cool looser flames
Our sensual parts provoke, chiding our bloods,
And quenching by their power those hidden sparks
That else would break out, and provoke our sense
To open fires ; so virtuous is that place.
Then, gentle shepherdess, believe, and grant :
In troth, it fits not with that face to scant
Your faithful shepherd of those chaste desires
He ever aimed at, and ——

Amo. Thou hast prevailed : farewell. This coming night
Shall crown thy chaste hopes with long-wished delight.

Peri. Our great god Pan reward thee for that good
Thou hast given thy poor shepherd ! Fairest bud
Of maiden virtues, when I leave to be
The true admirer of thy chastity,
Let me deserve the hot polluted name
Of a wild woodman.

[*Exit AMORET.*

Enter AMARILLIS.

Amar. Shepherd, may I desire to be believed,
What I shall blushing tell ?

Peri. Fair maid, you may.

Amar. Then, softly thus : I love thee, Perigot ;
And would be gladder to be loved again
Than the cold earth is in his frozen arms
To clip ' the wanton spring. Nay, do not start,
Nor wonder that I woo thee ; thou that art
The prime of our young grooms, even the top
Of all our lusty shepherds. What dull eye,
That never was acquainted with desire,
Hath seen thee wrestle, run, or cast the stone,
With nimble strength and fair delivery,
And hath not sparkled fire, and speedily
Sent secret heat to all the neighbouring veins ?
Who ever heard thee sing, that brought again

2. 1 Embrace.

That freedom back was lent unto thy voice?
 Then, do not blame me, shepherd, if I be
 One to be numbered in this company,
 Since none that ever saw thee yet were free.

Peri. Fair shepherdess, much pity I can lend
 To your complaints ; but sure I shall not love :
 All that is mine, myself and my best hopes,
 Are given already. Do not love him, then,
 That can not love again ; on other men
 Bestow those heats, more free, that may return
 You fire for fire, and in one flame equal burn.

Amar. Shall I rewarded be so slenderly
 For my affection, most unkind of men ?
 If I were old, or had agreed with art
 To give another nature to my cheeks,
 Or were I common mistress to the love
 Of every swain, or could I with such ease
 Call back my love as many a wanton doth,
 Thou might'st refuse me, shepherd ; but to thee
 I am only fixed and set ; let it not be
 A sport, thou gentle shepherd, to abuse
 The love of silly maid.

Peri. Fair soul, you use
 These words to little end : for, know, I may
 Better call back that time was yesterday,
 Or stay the coming night, than bring my love
 Home to myself again, or recreant prove.
 I will no longer hold you with delays :
 This present night I have appointed been
 To meet that chaste fair that enjoys my soul,
 In yonder grove, there to make up our loves.
 Be not deceived no longer, choose again :
 These neighbouring plains have many a comely swain,
 Fresher and freer far than I e'er was ;
 Bestow that love on them, and let me pass.
 Farewell : be happy in a better choice !

[*Exit*

Amar. Cruel, thou hast struck me deadlier with thy voice
 Than if the angry heavens with their quick flames
 Had shot me through. I must not leave to love,
 I can not ; no, I must enjoy thee, boy,
 Though the great dangers 'twixt my hopes and that
 Be infinite. There is a shepherd dwells
 Down by the moor, whose life hath ever shown
 More sullen discontent than Saturn's brow
 When he sits frowning on the births of men ;

One that doth wear himself away in loneness,
And never joys, unless it be in breaking
The holy plighted troths of mutual souls ;
One that lusts after every several beauty,
But never yet was known to love or like,
Were the face fairer or more full of truth
Than Phœbe in her fulness, or the youth
Of smooth Lyæus ; whose nigh-starvèd flocks
Are always scabby, and infect all sheep
They feed withal ; whose lambs are ever lost,
And die before their weaning ; and whose dog
Looks, like his master, lean and full of scurf,
Not caring for the pipe or whistle. This man may,
If he be well wrought do a deed of wonder,
Forcing me passage to my long desires :
And here he comes, as fitly to my purpose
As my quick thoughts could wish for.

Enter Sullen Shepherd.

Sull. Shep. Fresh beauty, let me not be thought uncivil,
Thus to be partner of your loneness : 't was
My love (that ever-working passion) drew
Me to this place, to seek some remedy
For my sick soul. Be not unkind and fair,
For such the mighty Cupid in his doom
Hath sworn to be avenged on ; then, give room
To my consuming fires, that so I may
Enjoy my long desires, and so allay
Those flames that else would burn my life away.

Amar. Shepherd, were I but sure thy heart were sound
As thy words seem to be, means might be found
To cure thee of thy long pains ; for to me
That heavy youth-consuming misery
The love-sick soul endures never was pleasing :
I could be well content with the quick easing
Of thee and thy hot fires, might it procure
Thy faith and farther service to be sure.

Sull. Shep. Name but that great work, danger, or what can
Be compassed by the wit or art of man.
And, if I fail in my performance, may
I never more kneel to the rising day !

Amar. Then, thus I try thee, shepherd. This same night
That now comes stealing on, a gentle pair
Have promised equal love, and do appoint
To make yon wood the place where hands and hearts

Are to be tied for ever : break their meeting
And their strong faith, and I am ever thine.

Sull. Shep. Tell me their names, and if I do not move,
By my great power, the centre of their love
From his fixed being, let me never more
Warm me by those fair eyes I thus adore.

Amar. Come ; as we go, I'll tell thee what they are,
And give thee fit directions for thy work. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD

Enter CLOE.

Cloe. How have I wronged the times or men, that thus,
After this holy feast, I pass unknown
And unsaluted ? 'T was not wont to be
Thus frozen with the younger company
Of jolly shepherds ; 't was not then held good
For lusty grooms to mix their quicker blood
With that dull humour, most unfit to be
The friend of man, cold and dull chastity.
Sure I am held not fair, or am too old,
Or else not free enough, or from my fold
Drive not a flock sufficient great to gain
The greedy eyes of wealth-alluring swain.
Yet, if I may believe what others say,
My face has foil enough ; nor can they lay
Justly too strict a coyness to my charge ;
My flocks are many, and the downs as large
They feed upon : then, let it ever be
Their coldness, not my virgin modesty
Makes me complain.

Enter THENOT.

The. Was ever man but I
Thus truly taken with uncertainty ?
Where shall that man be found that loves a mind
Made up in constancy, and dares not find
His love rewarded ? Here, let all men know,
A wretch that lives to love his mistress so.

Cloe. Shepherd, I pray thee stay. Where hast thou been ?
Or whither goest thou ? Here be woods as green
As any ; air likewise as fresh and sweet
As where smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curlèd streams ; with flowers as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any ;

Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
 Arbours o'ergrown with woodbines, caves, and dells ;
 Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
 Or gather rushes, to make many a ring
 For thy long fingers ; tell thee tales of love, —
 How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
 First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
 She took eternal fire that never dies ;
 How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
 His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
 Head of old Latmus, where she stoops each night,
 Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
 To kiss her sweetest.

The. Far from me are these
 Hot flashes, bred from wanton heat and ease ;
 I have forgot what love and loving meant ;
 Rhymes, songs, and merry rounds, that oft are sent
 To the soft ear of maid, are strange to me :
 Only I live to admire a chastity,
 That neither pleasing age,¹ smooth tongue, nor gold,
 Could ever break upon,² so sure the mould
 Is that her mind was cast in ; 't is to her
 I only am reserved ; she is my form I stir
 By, breathe and move ; 't is she, and only she,
 Can make me happy, or give misery.

Cloe. Good shepherd, may a stranger crave to know
 To whom this dear observance you do owe ?

The. You may, and by her virtue learn to square
 And level out your life : for to be fair,
 And nothing virtuous, only fits the eye
 Of gaudy youth and swelling vanity.
 Then, know, she's called the Virgin of the Grove,
 She that hath long since buried her chaste love,
 And now lives by his grave, for whose dear soul
 She hath vowed herself into the holy roll
 Of strict virginity : 't is her I so admire,
 Not any looser blood or new desire.

Cloe. Farewell, poor swain ! thou art not for my bend ;³
 I must have quicker souls, whose words may tend
 To some free action : give me him dare love
 At first encounter, and as soon dare prove !

[*Sings.*] Come, shepherds, come !

Come away

¹ Youth. Ed. 1778.

² Break in upon.

³ Bent, purpose.

Without delay,
Whilst the gentle time doth stay.
Green woods are dumb,
And will never tell to any
Those dear kisses, and those many
Sweet embraces that are given ;
Dainty pleasures, that would even
Raise in coldest age a fire,
And give virgin-blood desire.
Then, if ever,
Now or never,
Come and have it :
Think not I
Dare deny,
If you crave it.

Enter DAPHNIS.

Here comes another. Better be my speed,
Thou god of blood ! But certain, if I read
Not false, this is that modest shepherd, he
That only dare salute, but ne'er could be
Brought to kiss any, hold discourse, or sing,
Whisper, or boldly ask that wished thing
We all are born for ; one that makes loving faces,
And could be well content to covet graces,
Were they not got by boldness. In this thing
My hopes are frozen ; and, but faith doth bring
Him hither, I would sooner choose
A man made out of snow, and freer use
An eunuch to my ends ; but since he's here,
Thus I attempt him. — [*Aside.*] Thou, of men most dear,
Welcome to her that only for thy sake
Hath been content to live ! Here, boldly take
My hand in pledge, this hand, that never yet
Was given away to any ; and but sit
Down on this rushy bank, whilst I go pull
Fresh blossoms from the boughs, or quickly cull
The choicest delicacies from yonder mead,
To make thee chains or chaplets, or to spread
Under our fainting bodies, when delight
Shall lock up all our senses. How the sight
Of those smooth rising cheeks renew the story
Of young Adonis, when in pride and glory
He lay infolded 'twixt the beating arms
Of willing Venus ! Methinks stronger charms

Dwell in those speaking eyes, and on that brow
More sweetness than the painters can allow
To their best pieces. Not Narcissus, he
That wept himself away in memory
Of his own beauty, nor Silvanus' boy,
Nor the twice-ravished maid, for whom old Troy
Fell by the hand of Pyrrhus, may to thee
Be otherwise compared, than some dead tree
To a young fruitful olive.

Daph. I can love,
But I am loath to say so, lest I prove
Too soon unhappy.

Cloe. Happy, thou wouldst say.
My dearest Daphnis, blush not; if the day
To thee and thy soft heats be enemy,
Then take the coming night; fair youth, 't is free
To all the world. Shepherd, I'll meet thee then
When darkness hath shut up the eyes of men,
In yonder grove: speak, shall our meeting hold?
Indeed you are too bashful; be more bold,
And tell me ay.

Daph. I am content to say so,
And would be glad to meet, might I but pray so
Much from your fairness, that you would be true.

Cloe. Shepherd, thou hast thy wish.

Daph. Fresh maid, adieu.
Yet one word more: since you have drawn me on
To come this night, fear not to meet alone
That man that will not offer to be ill,
Though your bright self would ask it, for his fill
Of this world's goodness; do not fear him, then,
But keep your 'pointed time. Let other men
Set up their bloods to sale, mine shall be ever
Fair as the soul it carries, and unchaste never.

[*Exit.*

Cloe. Yet am I poorer than I was before.
Is it not strange, among so many a score
Of lusty bloods, I should pick out these things,
Whose veins, like a dull river far from springs,
Is still the same, slow, heavy, and unfit
For stream or motion, though the strong winds hit
With their continual power upon his sides?
Oh, happy be your names that have been brides,
And tasted those rare sweets for which I pine!
And far more heavy be thy grief and tine,¹

¹ The same as "teen," which signifies sorrow, anger, injury.— *Weber.*

Thou lazy swain, that mayst relieve my needs,
Than his, upon whose liver always feeds
A hungry vulture !

Enter ALEXIS.

Alex. Can such beauty be
Safe in his own guard, and not draw the eye
Of him that passeth on, to greedy gaze
Or covetous desire, whilst in a maze
The better part contemplates, giving rein,
And wishèd freedom to the labouring vein?
Fairest and whitest, may I crave to know
The cause of your retirement, where you go
Thus all alone? Methinks the downs are sweeter,
And the young company of swains more meeter,
Than these forsaken and untrodden places.
Give not yourself to loneliness, and those graces
Hide from the eyes of men, that were intended
To live amongst us swains.

Cloe. Thou art befriended,
Shepherd : in all my life I have not seen
A man, in whom greater contents have been,
Than thou thyself art. I could tell thee more,
Were there but any hope left to restore
My freedom lost. Oh, lend me all thy red,
Thou shame-faced Morning, when from Tithon's bed
Thou risest ever-maiden !

Alex. If for me,
Thou sweetest of all sweets, these flashes be,
Speak, and be satisfied. Oh, guide her tongue,
My better angel ; force my name among
Her modest thoughts, that the first word may be —

Cloe. Alexis, when the sun shall kiss the sea,
Taking his rest by the white Thetis' side,
Meet me in the holy wood, where I'll abide
Thy coming, shepherd.

Alex. If I stay behind,
An everlasting dulness, and the wind,
That as he passeth by shuts up the stream
Of Rhine or Volga, whilst the sun's hot beam
Beats back again, seize me, and let me turn
To coldness more than ice ! Oh, how I burn
And rise in youth and fire ! I dare not stay.

Cloe. My name shall be your word.

Alex. Fly, fly, thou day !

[*Exit.*

Cloc. My grief is great, if both these boys should fail :
He that will use all winds must shift his sail. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—A PASTURE

Enter Old Shepherd ringing a bell, and Priest of Pan following.

PRIEST. Shepherds all, and maidens fair,
Fold your flocks up, for the air
'Gins to thicken, and the sun
Already his great course hath run.
See the dew-drops how they kiss
Every little flower that is ;
Hanging on their velvet heads,
Like a rope of crystal beads :
See the heavy clouds low falling,
And bright Hesperus down calling
The dead Night from under ground ;
At whose rising mists unsound,
Damp and vapours fly apace,
Hovering o'er the wanton face
Of these pastures, where they come,
Striking dead both bud and bloom :
Therefore, from such danger lock
Every one his loved flock ;
And let your dogs lie loose without,
Lest the wolf come as a scout
From the mountain, and, ere day,
Bear a lamb or kid away ;
Or the crafty thievish fox
Break upon your simple flocks.
To secure yourselves from these,
Be not too secure in ease ;
Let one eye his watches keep,
Whilst the other eye doth sleep ;
So you shall good shepherds prove,
And for ever hold the love
Of our great god. Sweetest slumbers,
And soft silence, fall in numbers

On your eyelids ! So, farewell :
Thus I end my evening's knell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER

Enter CLORIN, sorting herbs.

Clo. Now let me know what my best art hath done,
Helped by the great power of the virtuous moon
In her full light. Oh, you sons of earth,
You only brood, unto whose happy birth
Virtue was given, holding more of nature
Than man, her first-born and most perfect creature,
Let me adore you ! you, that only can
Help or kill nature, drawing out that span
Of life and breath even to the end of time ;
You, that these hands did crop long before prime
Of day, give me your names, and, next, your hidden power.
This is the clote,¹ bearing a yellow flower ;
And this, black horehound ; both are very good
For sheep or shepherd bitten by a wood²
Dog's venom'd tooth : these rhamnus³ branches are,
Which, stuck in entries, or about the bar
That holds the door, kill all enchantments, charms
(Were they Medea's verses), that do harms
To men or cattle : these for frenzy be
A speedy and a sovereign remedy,
The bitter wormwood, sage, and marigold ;
Such sympathy with man's good they do hold :
This tormentil, whose virtue is to part
All deadly killing poison from the heart :
And, here, narcissus root, for swellings best :
Yellow lysimachus,⁴ to give sweet rest
To the faint shepherd, killing, where it comes,
All busy gnats, and every fly that hums :
For leprosy, darnel and celandine,
With calamint, whose virtues do refine
The blood of man, making it free and fair
As the first hour it breathed, or the best air :
Here, other two ; but your rebellious use
Is not for me, whose goodness is abuse ;
Therefore, foul standergrass, from me and mine
I banish thee, with lustful turpentine ;

¹ The yellow water-lily is still so called in Dorset.

² Mad.

³ Buckthorn.

⁴ Willow-herb, or loosestrife.

You that entice the veins and stir the heat
To civil mutiny, scaling the seat
Our reason moves in, and deluding it
With dreams and wanton fancies, till the fit
Of burning lust be quenched, by appetite
Robbing the soul of blessedness and light :
And thou, light vervain, too, thou must go after,
Provoking easy souls to mirth and laughter ;
No more shall I dip thee in water now,
And sprinkle every post and every bough
With thy well-pleasing juice, to make the grooms
Swell with high mirth, and with joy all the rooms.

Enter THENOT.

The. This is the cabin where the best of all
Her sex that ever breathed, or ever shall
Give heat or happiness to the shepherd's side,
Doth only to her worthy self abide.
Thou blessed star, I thank thee for thy light,
Thou by whose power the darkness of sad night
Is banished from the earth, in whose dull place
Thy chaster beams play on the heavy face
Of all the world, making the blue sea smile,
To see how cunningly thou dost beguile
Thy brother of his brightness, giving day
Again from chaos ; whiter than that way
That leads to Jove's high court, and chaster far
Than chastity itself, you blessed star
That nightly shines ! thou, all the constancy
That in all women was or e'er shall be ;
From whose fair eye-balls flies that holy fire
That poets style the mother of desire,
Infusing into every gentle breast
A soul of greater price, and far more blest,
Than that quick power which gives a difference
'Twixt man and creatures of a lower sense !

Cl. Shepherd, how cam'st thou hither to this place ?
No way is trodden ; all the verdant grass
The spring shot up stands yet unbruised here
Of any foot ; only the dappled deer,
Far from the feared sound of crooked horn,
Dwells in this fastness.

The. Chaster than the morn,
I have not wandered, or by strong illusion
Into this virtuous place have made intrusion :

hold on
a second

But hither am I come (believe me, fair,) To seek you out, of whose great good the air Is full, and strongly labours, whilst the sound Breaks against heaven, and drives into a stound Th' amazed shepherd, that such virtue can Be resident in lesser than a man.

Clo. If any art I have, or hidden skill, May cure thee of disease or festered ill, Whose grief or greenness to another's eye May seem impossible of remedy, I dare yet undertake it.

The. 'T is no pain I suffer through disease, no beating vein Conveys infection dangerous to the heart, No part imposthomed, to be cured by art, This body holds; and yet a fuller grief Than ever skilful hand did give relief Dwells on my soul, and may be healed by you, Fair, beauteous virgin.

Clo. Then, shepherd, let me sue To know thy grief: that man yet never knew The way to health that durst not show his sore.

The. Then, fairest, know, I love you.

Clo. Swain, no more! Thou hast abused the strictness of this place, And offered sacrilegious foul disgrace To the sweet rest of these interrèd bones; For fear of whose ascending, fly at once, Thou and thy idle passions, that the sight Of death and speedy vengeance may not fright Thy very soul with horror.

The. Let me not, Thou all perfection, merit such a blot For my true zealous faith.

Clo. Dar'st thou abide To see this holy earth at once divide, And give her body up? for sure it will, If thou pursu'st with wanton flames to fill This hallowed place: therefore repent and go, Whilst I with prayers appease his ghost below. That else would tell thee what it were to be A rival in that virtuous love that he Embraces yet.

The. 'T is not the white or red Inhabits in your cheek that thus can wed

My mind to adoration ; nor your eye,
Though it be full and fair, your forehead high
And smooth as Pelop's shoulder ; not the smile
Lies watching in those dimples to beguile
The easy soul ; your hands and fingers long,
With veins enamelled richly ; nor your tongue,
Though it spoke sweeter than Arion's harp ;
Your hair woven into many a curious warp,
Able in endless error to enfold
The wandering soul ; not the true perfect mould,
Of all your body, which as pure doth show
In maiden-whiteness as the Alpen-snow :
All these, were but your constancy away,
Would please me less than a black stormy day
The wretched seaman toiling through the deep.
But, whilst this honoured strictness you do keep,
Though all the plagues that e'er begotten were
In the great womb of air were settled here,
In opposition, I would, like the tree,
Shake off those drops of weakness, and be free
Even in the arm of danger.

Clo. Would'st thou have
Me raise again, fond ¹ man, from silent grave
Those sparks, that long ago were buried here
With my dead friend's cold ashes ?

The. Dearest dear,
I dare not ask it, nor you must not grant :
Stand strongly to your vow, and do not faint.
Remember how he loved you, and be still
The same opinion speaks you : let not will,
And that great god of women, appetite,
Set up your blood again ; do not invite
Desire and fancy² from their long exile,
To seat them once more in a pleasing smile :
Be, like a rock, made firmly up 'gainst all
The power of angry heaven, or the strong fall
Of Neptune's battery. If you yield, I die
To all affection ; 't is that loyalty
You tie unto this grave I so admire :
And yet there's something else I would desire,
If you would hear me, but withal deny.
Oh, Pan ! what an uncertain destiny
Hangs over all my hopes ! I will retire ;

¹ Foolish.

² Love.

For, if I longer stay, this double fire
Will lick my life up.

Clo. Do ; and let time wear out
What art and nature can not bring about.

The. Farewell, thou soul of virtue, and be blest
For ever, whilst that here I wretched rest
Thus to myself ! Yet grant me leave to dwell
In kenning of this arbour : yon same dell,
O'ertopped with mourning cypress and sad yew,
Shall be my cabin, where I'll early rue,
Before the sun hath kissed this dew away,
The hard uncertain chance which fate doth lay
Upon this head.

Clo. The gods give quick release
And happy cure unto thy hard disease !

[*Exit THENOT, CLORIN retiring into the Bower.*]

SCENE III.—ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD

Enter SULLEN SHEPHERD.

Sull. Shep. I do not love this wench that I should meet ;
For ne'er did my unconstant eye yet greet
That beauty, were it sweeter or more fair
Than the new blossoms when the morning-air
Blows gently on them, or the breaking light,
When many maiden-blushes to our sight
Shoot from his early face : were all these set
In some neat form before me, 't would not get
The least love from me ; some desire it might,
Or present burning. All to me in sight
Are equal ; be they fair, or black, or brown,
Virgin, or careless wanton, I can crown
My appetite with any ; swear as oft,
And weep, as any ; melt my words as soft
Into a maiden's ears, and tell how long
My heart has been her servant, and how strong
My passions are ; call her unkind and cruel ;
Offer her all I have to gain the jewel
Maidens so highly prize ; then loathe, and fly :
This do I hold a blessed destiny.

Enter AMARILLIS.

Amar. Hail, shepherd ! Pan bless both thy flock and thee,
For being mindful of thy word to me !

Sull. Shep. Welcome, fair shepherdess ! thy loving swain
Gives thee the self-same wishes back again ;
Who till this present hour ne'er knew that eye
Could make me cross mine arms, or daily die
With fresh consumings. Boldly tell me, then,
How shall we part their faithful loves, and when?
Shall I belie him to her? shall I swear
His faith is false and he loves every where?
I'll say he mocked her th' other day to you ;
Which will by your confirming show as true,
For she is of so pure an honesty,
To think, because she will not, none will lie.
Or else to him I'll slander Amoret,
And say, she but seems chaste ; I'll swear she met
Me 'mongst the shady sycamores last night,
And loosely offered up her flame and sprite
Into my bosom ; made a wanton bed
Of leaves and many flowers, where she spread
Her willing body to be pressed by me ;
There have I carved her name on many a tree,
Together with mine own. To make this show
More full of seeming, — Hobinal, you know,
Son to the agèd shepherd of the glen,
Him I have sorted out of many men,
To say he found us at our private sport,
And roused us 'fore our time by his resort :
This to confirm, I've promised to the boy
Many a pretty knack and many a toy ;
As gins to catch him birds, with bow and bolt
To shoot at nimble squirrels in the holt ;
A pair of painted buskins, and a lamb
Soft as his own locks or the down of swan.
This have I done to win you ; which doth give
Me double pleasure : discord makes me live.

Amar. Loved swain, I thank you. These tricks might prevail

With other rustic shepherds, but will fail
Even once to stir, much more to overthrow,
His fixèd love from judgment, who doth know
Your nature, my end, and his chosen's merit ;
Therefore some stronger way must force his spirit,
Which I have found : give second, and my love
Is everlasting thine.

Sull. Shep. Try me, and prove.

Amar. These happy pair of lovers meet straightway

Soon as they fold their flocks up with the day,
In the thick grove bordering upon yon hill,
In whose hard side nature hath carved a well,
And, but that matchless spring which poets know,
Was ne'er the like to this : by it doth grow,
About the sides, all herbs which witches use,
All simples good for medicine or abuse,
All sweets that crown the happy nuptial day,
With all their colours ; there the month of May
Is ever dwelling, all is young and green ;
There's not a grass on which was ever seen
The falling autumn or cold winter's hand ;
So full of heat and virtue is the land
About this fountain, which doth slowly break,
Below yon mountain's foot into a creek
That waters all the valley, giving fish
Of many sorts to fill the shepherd's dish.
This holy well, my grandame that is dead,
Right wise in charms, hath often to me said,
Hath power to change the form of any creature,
Being thrice dipped o'er the head, into what feature
Or shape 'twould please the letter-down to crave,
Who must pronounce this charm too, which she gave

[*Showing a scroll.*

Me on her deathbed ; told me what, and how,
I should apply unto the patients' brow
That would be changed, casting them thrice asleep,
Before I trusted them into this deep :
All this she showed me, and did charge me prove
This secret of her art, if crost in love.
I'll this attempt now, shepherd ; I have here
All her prescriptions, and I will not fear
To be myself dipped. Come, my temples bind
With these sad herbs, and when I sleep, you find,
As you do speak your charm, thrice down me let,
And bid the water raise me Amoret ;
Which being done, leave me to my affair,
And ere the day shall quite itself outwear,
I will return unto my shepherd's arm ;
Dip me again, and then repeat this charm,
And pluck me up myself, whom freely take,
And the hott'st fire of thine affection slake.

Sull. Shep. And if I fit thee not, then fit not me.
I long the truth of this well's power to see.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD

Enter DAPHNIS.

Daph. Here will I stay, for this the covert is
Where I appointed Cloe. Do not miss,
Thou bright-eyed virgin; come, oh come, my fair!
Be not abused with fear, or let cold care
Of honour stay thee from thy shepherd's arm,
Who would as hard be won to offer harm
To thy chaste thoughts, as whiteness from the day,
Or yon great round to move another way:
My language shall be honest, full of truth,
My flames as smooth and spotless as my youth;
I will not entertain that wandering thought,
Whose easy current may at length be brought
To a loose vastness.

Alexis. [*Within.*] Cloe!

Daph. 'Tis her voice,
And I must answer. — Cloe! — Oh, the choice
Of dear embraces, chaste and holy strains
Our hands shall give! I charge you, all my veins,
Through which the blood and spirit take their way,
Lock up your disobedient heats, and stay
Those mutinous desires that else would grow
To strong rebellion; do not wilder show
Than blushing modesty may entertain.

Alexis. [*Within.*] Cloe!

Daph. There sounds that blessèd name again,
And I will meet it. Let me not mistake:

Enter ALEXIS.

This is some shepherd. Sure, I am awake:
What may this riddle mean? I will retire,
To give myself more knowledge.

[Retires.]

Alexis. Oh, my fire,
How thou consum'st me! — Cloe, answer me!
Alexis, strong Alexis, high and free,
Calls upon Cloe. See, mine arms are full
Of entertainment, ready for to pull
That golden fruit which too, too long hath hung
Tempting the greedy eye. Thou stay'st too long;
I am impatient of these mad delays:
I must not leave unsought those many ways

That lead into this centre, till I find

Quench for my burning lust. I come, unkind !

[*Exit.*

Daph. [*Coming forward.*] Can my imagination work me so much ill,

That I may credit this for truth, and still

Believe mine eyes? or shall I firmly hold

Her yet untainted, and these sights but bold

Illusion? Sure, such fancies oft have been

Sent to abuse true love, and yet are seen

Daring to blind the virtuous thought with error ;

But be they far from me with their fond terror !

I am resolved my Cloe yet is true.

Cloe. [*Within.*] Cloe !

Daph. Hark ! Cloe ! Sure, this voice is new,

Whose shrillness, like the sounding of a bell,

Tells me it is a woman. — Cloe, tell

Thy blessed name again.

Cloe. [*Within.*] Cloe ! here !

Daph. Oh, what a grief is this, to be so near,

And not encounter !

Enter CLOE.

Cloe. Shepherd, we are met :

Draw close into the covert, lest the wet,

Which falls like lazy mist upon the ground,

Soak through your startups. ¹

Daph. Fairest, are you found ?

How have we wandered, that the better part

Of this good night is perished? Oh, my heart

How have I longed to meet you, how to kiss

Those lily hands, how to receive the bliss

That charming tongue gives to the happy ear

Of him that drinks your language ! But I fear

I am too much unmannered, far too rude,

And almost grown lascivious, to intrude

These hot behaviours ; where regard of fame,

Honour and modesty, a virtuous name,

And such discourse as one fair sister may

Without offence unto the brother say,

Should rather have been tendered. But, believe,

Here dwells a better temper : do not grieve,

Then, ever kindest, that my first salute

Seasons so much of fancy ; I am mute

¹ Rustic boots with high tops.

Henceforth to all discourses but shall be
Suiting to your sweet thoughts and modesty.
Indeed, I will not ask a kiss of you,
No, not to wring your fingers, nor to sue
To those blest pair of fixèd stars for smiles;
All a young lover's cunning, all his wiles,
And pretty wanton dyings, shall to me
Be strangers; only to your chastity
I am devoted ever.

Cloe. Honest swain,
First let me thank you, then return again
As much of my love. — No, thou art too cold,
Unhappy boy, not tempered to my mould;
Thy blood falls downward. 'Tis not fear
To offend in boldness wins; they never wear
Deservèd favours that deny to take
When they are offered freely. Do I wake,
To see a man of his youth, years, and feature,
And such a one as we call goodly creature,
Thus backward? What a world of precious art
Were merely 'lost, to make him do his part!
But I will shake him off, that dares not hold:
Let men that hope to be beloved be bold.
Daphnis, I do desire, since we are met
So happily, our lives and fortunes set
Upon one stake, to give assurance now,
By interchange of hands and holy vow,
Never to break again. Walk you that way,
Whilst I in zealous meditation stray
A little this way: when we both have ended
These rites and duties, by the woods befriended
And secrecy of night, retire and find
An aged oak, whose hollowness may bind
Us both within his body; thither go;
It stands within yon bottom.

Daph. Be it so.

Cloe. And I will meet there never more with thee,
Thou idle shamefacedness!

Alexis. [*Within.*] *Cloe*!

Cloe. 'Tis he!

That dare, I hope, be bolder.

Alexis. [*Within.*] *Cloe*!

Cloe. Now,

Great Pan, for *Syrinx*' sake, bid speed our plough!

[*Aside.*

[*Exit.*

[*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—PART OF THE WOOD WITH THE HOLY WELL

Enter Sullen Shepherd, carrying AMARILLIS asleep.

SULL. SHEP. From thy forehead thus I take
These herbs, and charge thee not awake
Till in yonder holy well
Thrice, with powerful magic spell
Filled with many a baleful word,
Thou hast been dipped. Thus, with my cord
Of blasted hemp, by moonlight twined,
I do thy sleepy body bind.
I turn thy head unto the east,
And thy feet unto the west,
Thy left arm to the south put forth,
And thy right unto the north.
I take thy body from the ground,
In this deep and deadly swoond,
And into this holy spring
I let thee slide down by my string.—

[Lets her down into the well.]

Take this maid, thou holy pit,
To thy bottom; nearer yet;
In thy water pure and sweet
By thy leave I dip her feet;
Thus I let her lower yet,
That her ankles may be wet;
Yet down lower, let her knee
In thy waters washèd be;
There stop. — Fly away,
Everything that loves the day!
Truth, that hath but one face,
Thus I charm thee from this place.
Snakes that cast your coats for new,
Chameleons that alter hue,
Hares that yearly sexes change,
Proteus altering oft and strange,
Hecatè with shapes three,
Let this maiden changèd be,
With this holy water wet,
To the shape of Amoret!

Cynthia, work thou with my charm! —

Thus I draw thee, free from harm,

[*Draws her out of the well, in the shape of*
AMORET.

Up out of this blessed lake :

Rise both like her and awake !

Amar. Speak, shepherd, am I Amoret to sight?

Or hast thou missed in any magic rite,

For want of which any defect in me

May make our practices discovered be?

Sull. Shep. By yonder moon, but that I here do stand,
Whose breath hath thus transformed thee, and whose hand
Let thee down dry, and plucked thee up thus wet,
I should myself take thee for Amoret !

Thou art, in clothes, in feature, voice and hue,

So like, that sense can not distinguish you.

Amar. Then, this deceit, which can not crossèd be,

At once shall lose her him, and gain thee me.

Hither she needs must come, by promise made ;

And, sure, his nature never was so bad,

To bid a virgin meet him in the wood,

When night and fear are up, but understood

'T was his part to come first. Being come, I'll say,

My constant love made me come first and stay ;

Then will I lead him further to the grove :

But stay you here, and, if his own true love

Shall seek him here, set her in some wrong path,

Which say her lover lately trodden hath ;

I'll not be far from hence. If need there be,

Here is another charm, whose power will free

[*Gives a scroll.*

The dazzled sense, read by the moonbeams clear,

And in my own true shape make me appear.

Enter PERIGOT.

Sull. Shep. Stand close : here's Perigot ; whose constant heart
Longs to behold her in whose shape thou art.

[*Retires with AMARILLES.*

Per. This is the place. — Fair Amoret ! — The hour

Is yet scarce come. Here every sylvan power

Delights to be, about yon sacred well,

Which they have blessed with many a powerful spell ;

For never traveller in dead of night,

Nor strayed beasts have fall'n in ; but when sight

Hath failed them, then their right way they have found

By help of them, so holy is the ground.
 But I will further seek, lest Amoret
 Should be first come, and so stray long unmet.—
 My Amoret, Amoret !

[Exit.

Amar. [Coming forward.] Perigot !

Per. [Within.] My love !

Amar. I come, my love !

[Exit.

Sull. Shep. Now she hath got
 Her own desires, and I shall gainer be
 Of my long-looked-for hopes, as well as she.
 How bright the moon shines here, as if she strove
 To show her glory in this little grove

Enter AMORET.

To some new-lovèd shepherd ! Yonder is
 Another Amoret. Where differs this
 From that ? but that she Perigot hath met,
 I should have ta'en this for the counterfeit,
 Herbs, woods, and springs, the power that in you lies,
 If mortal men could know your properties !

[Aside.

Amo. Methinks it is not night ; I have no fear,
 Walking this wood, of lion or of bear,
 Whose names at other times have made me quake,
 When any shepherdess in her tale spake
 Of some of them, that underneath a wood
 Have torn true lovers that together stood ;
 Methinks there are no goblins, and men's talk,
 That in these woods the nimble fairies walk,
 Are fables ! such a strong heart I have got,
 Because I come to meet with Perigot.—
 My Perigot ! Who's that ? my Perigot ?

Sull. Shep. [Coming forward.] Fair maid !

Amo. Aye me, thou art not Perigot ?

Sull. Shep. But I can tell you news of Perigot :
 An hour together under yonder tree
 He sat with wreathèd arms, and called on thee,
 And said, " Why, Amoret, stay'st thou so long ?"
 Then starting up, down yonder path he flung,
 Lest thou had'st missed thy way. Were it daylight
 He could not yet have borne him out of sight.

Amo. Thanks, gentle shepherd ; and beshrew my stay,
 That made me fearful I had lost my way
 As fast as my weak legs (that can not be
 Weary with seeking him) will carry me,

I'll follow ; and, for this thy care of me,

Pray Pan thy love may ever follow thee ! [Exit.

Sull. Shep. How bright she was, how lovely did she show !
Was it not pity to deceive her so ?

She plucked her garments up, and tripped away,

And with a virgin-innocence did pray

For me that perjured her.¹ Whilst she was here,

Methought the beams of light that did appear

Were shot from her : methought the moon gave none

But what it had from her. She was alone

With me ; if then her presence did so move,

Why did I not assay to win her love ?

She would not sure have yielded unto me ;

Women love only opportunity,

And not the man : or if she had denied,

Alone, I might have forced her to have tried

Who had been stronger ; oh, vain fool, to let

Such blessed occasion pass ! I'll follow yet ;

My blood is up ; I can not now forbear.

Enter ALEXIS and CLOE.

I come, sweet Amoret ! — Soft, who is here ?

A pair of lovers ? He shall yield her me :

Now lust is up, alike all women be. [Aside and retires.

Alexis. Where shall we rest ? But for the love of me,

Cloe, I know, ere this would weary be.

Cloe. Alexis, let us rest here, if the place

Be private, and out of the common trace

Of every shepherd ; for, I understood,

This night a number are about the wood :

Then, let us choose some place, where, out of sight,

We freely may enjoy our stol'n delight.

Alexis. Then, boldly here, where we shall ne'er be found ;

No shepherd's way lies here, 't is hallowed ground ;

No maid seeks here her strayed cow or sheep ;

Fairies and fawns and satyrs do it keep.²

Then, carelessly rest here, and clip and kiss,

And let no fear make us our pleasures miss.

Cloe. Then, lie by me : the sooner we begin,

The longer ere the day descry our sin. [They lie down.

Sull. Shep. [Coming forward.] Forbear to touch my love ;
or, by yon flame,³

The greatest power that shepherds dare to name,

¹ Perjured myself to her.

² Frequent.

³ The moon.

Here where thou sit'st, under this holy tree,
Her to dishonour, thou shalt buried be !

Alexis. If Pan himself should come out of the lawns,
With all his troops of satyrs and of fawns,
And bid me leave, I swear by her two eyes,
(A greater oath than thine) I would not rise !

Sull. Shep. Then, from the cold earth never thou shalt move,
But lose at one stroke both thy life and love.

[*Wounds him with his spear.*]

Cloe. Hold, gentle shepherd !

Sull. Shep. Fairest shepherdess,
Come you with me ; I do not love you less
Than that fond man, that would have kept you there
From me of more desert.

Alexis. Oh, yet forbear
To take her from me ! Give me leave to die
By her !

Enter SATYR ; Sullen Shepherd runs one way, and CLOE another.

Sat. Now, whilst the moon doth rule the sky,

And the stars, whose feeble light
Gives a pale shadow to the night,
Are up, great Pan commanded me
To walk this grove about, whilst he,
In a corner of the wood,
Where never mortal foot hath stood,
Keeps dancing, music, and a feast,
To entertain a lovely guest :
Where he gives her many a rose,
Sweeter than the breath that blows
The leaves, grapes, berries of the best ;
I never saw so great a feast.

But, to my charge. Here must I stay,
To see what mortals lose their way,
And by a false fire, seeming bright,
Train them in and leave them right,
Then must I watch if any be
Forcing of a chastity ;
If I find it, then in haste
Give my wreathèd horn a blast,
And the fairies all will run,
Wildly dancing by the moon,
And will pinch him to the bone.
Till his lustful thoughts be gone.

Alexis. Oh, death !

Sat. Back again about this ground ;
Sure, I hear a mortal sound. —
I bind thee by this powerful spell,
By the waters of this well,
By the glimmering moonbeams bright,
Speak again, thou mortal wight !

Alexis. Oh !

Sat. Here the foolish mortal lies,
Sleeping on the ground. — Arise ! —
The poor wight is almost dead :
On the ground his wounds have bled,
And his clothes fouled with his blood :
To my goddess in the wood
Will I lead him, whose hand pure
Will help this mortal wight to cure.

[*Exit carrying ALEXIS.*

Re-enter CLOE.

Cloe. Since I beheld yon shaggy man, my breast
Doth pant ; each bush, methinks, should hide a beast.
Yet my desire keeps still above my fear :
I would fain meet some shepherd, knew I where.
Here upon this ground
I left my love, all bloody with his wound ;
Yet, till that fearful shape made me begone,
Though he were hurt, I furnished was of one ;
But now both lost. — Alexis, speak or move,
If thou hast any life ; thou art yet my love ! —
He's dead, or else is with his little might
Crept from the bank for fear of that ill sprite. —
Then, where art thou that struck 'st my love ? Oh, stay !
Bring me thyself in change, and then I'll say
Thou has some justice : I will make thee trim
With flowers and garlands that were meant for him ;
I'll clip thee round with both mine arms, as fast
As I did mean he should have been embraced.
But thou art fled. — What hope is left for me ?
I'll run to Daphnis in the hollow tree,
Whom I did mean to mock ; though hope be small
To make him bold, rather than none at all,
I'll try him ; his heart, and my behaviour too,
Perhaps may teach him what he ought to do.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter Sullen Shepherd.

Sull. Shep. This was the place. 'T was but my feeble sight,
Mixed with the horror of my deed, and night,

That shaped these fears, and made me run away,
 And lose my beauteous hardly-gotten prey. —
 Speak, gentle shepherdess ! I am alone,
 And tender love for love. — But she is gone
 From me, that, having struck her lover dead,
 For silly fear left her alone, and fled,
 And see, the wounded body is removed
 By her of whom it was so well beloved.
 But all these fancies must be quite forgot,
 I must lie close ; here comes young Perigot,
 With subtle Amarillis in the shape
 Of Amoret. Pray love, he may not 'scape

[Retires.]

Enter PERIGOT, and AMARILLIS in the shape of AMORET.

Amar. Belovèd Perigot, show me some place,
 Where I may rest my limbs, weak with the chase
 Of thee, an hour before thou cam'st at least.

Peri. Beshrew my tardy steps ! Here shalt thou rest
 Upon this holy bank : no deadly snake
 Upon this turf herself in folds doth make ;
 Here is no poison for the toad to feed ;
 Here boldly spread thy hands ; no venomèd weed
 Dares blister them ; no slimy snail dare creep
 Over thy face when thou art fast asleep ;
 Here never durst the dabbling cuckoo spit ;
 No slough of falling star did ever hit
 Upon this bank ; let this thy cabin be ;
 This other, set with violets, for me.

[They lie down.]

Amar. Thou dost not love me, Perigot.

Peri. Fair maid,
 You only love to hear it often said ;
 You do not doubt.

Amar. Believe me, but I do.

Peri. What, shall we now begin again to woo ?
 'Tis the best way to make your lover last,
 To play with him when you have caught him fast.

Amar. By Pan I swear, belovèd Perigot,
 And by yon moon, I think thou lov'st me not.

Peri. By Pan I swear, — and, if I falsely swear,
 Let him not guard my flocks ; let foxes tear
 My earliest lambs, and wolves, whilst I do sleep,
 Fall on the rest ; a rot among my sheep, —
 I love thee better than the careful ewe
 The new-yeaned lamb that is of her own hue ;
 I dote upon thee more than that young lamb

Doth on the bag that feeds him from his dam !
Were there a sort ¹ of wolves got in my fold,
And one ran after thee, both young and old
Should be devoured, and it should be my strife
To save thee, whom I love above my life.

Amar. How should I trust thee, when I see thee choose
Another bed, and dost my side refuse ?

Peri. 'Twas only that the chaste thoughts might be shown
'Twixt thee and me, although we were alone.

Amar. Come, Perigot will show his power, that he
Can make his Amoret, though she weary be,
Rise nimbly from her couch, and come to his.
Here, take thy Amoret ; embrace and kiss.

[*Lies down beside him.*]

Peri. What means my love ?

Amar. To do as lovers should,
That are to be enjoyed, not to be wooed.
There's ne'er a shepherdess in all the plain
Can kiss thee with more art ; there's none can feign
More wanton tricks.

Peri. Forbear, dear soul, to try
Whether my heart be pure ; I'll rather die
Than nourish one thought to dishonour thee.

Amar. Still think'st thou such a thing as chastity
Is amongst women ? Perigot, there's none
That with her love is in a wood alone,
And would come home a maid : be not abused
With thy fond first belief ; let time be used.

[*PERIGOT rises.*]

Why dost thou rise ?

Peri. My true heart thou hast slain !

Amar. Faith, Perigot, I'll pluck thee down again.

Peri. Let go, thou serpent, that into my breast
Hast with thy cunning dived ! — Art not in jest ?

Amar. Sweet love, lie down.

Peri. Since this I live to see,
Some bitter north wind blast my flocks and me !

Amar. You swore you loved, yet will not do my will.

Peri. Oh, be as thou wert once, I'll love thee still !

Amar. I am as still I was, and all my kind ;
Though other shows we have, poor men to blind.

Peri. Then, here I end all love ; and, lest my vain
Belief should ever draw me in again,

Before thy face, that hath my youth misled,
I end my life ! my blood be on thy head !

[Offers to kill himself with his spear.

Amar. [Rising.] Oh, hold thy hands, thy Amoret doth cry !

Peri. Thou counsel'st well ; first, Amoret shall die,
That is the cause of my eternal smart.

Amar. Oh, hold !

[Exit

Peri. This steel shall pierce thy lustful heart !

[Exit, running after her.

Sull. Shep. [Coming forward.] Up and down, everywhere,
I strew the herbs, to purge the air :

Let your odour drive hence

All mists that dazzle sense.

Herbs and springs, whose hidden might

Alters shape, and mocks the sight,

Thus I charge ye to undo

All before I brought ye to !

Let her fly, let her 'scape ;

Give again her own shape !

[Retires.

Re-enter AMARILLIS in her own shape, and PERIGOT following with his spear.

Amar. Forbear, thou gentle swain ! thou dost mistake ;

She whom thou follow'dst fled into the brake,

And as I crossed thy way, I met thy wrath ;

The only fear of which near slain me hath.

Peri. Pardon, fair shepherdess : my rage and night

Were both upon me, and beguiled my sight ;

But far be it from me to spill the blood

Of harmless maids that wander in the wood !

[Exit AMARILLIS.

Enter AMORET.

Amo. Many a weary step, in yonder path,

Poor hopeless Amoret twice trodden hath,

To seek her Perigot ; yet can not hear

His voice. — My Perigot ! She loves thee dear

That calls.

Peri. See yonder where she is ! how fair

She shows ! and yet her breath infects the air.

Amo. My Perigot !

Peri. Here.

Amo. Happy !

Peri. Hapless ! first

It lights on thee : the next blow is the worst.

[Wounds her.

Amo. Stay, Perigot ! my love, thou art unjust. [*Falls.*

Peri. Death is the best reward that's due to lust. [*Exit.*

Sull. Shep. Now shall their love be crossed ; for, being struck,
I'll throw her in the fount, lest being took
By some night-traveller, whose honest care
May help to cure her. [*Aside, and then comes forward.*] —
Shepherdess, prepare

Yourself to die !

Amo. No mercy do I crave ;
Thou can'st not give a worse blow than I have.
Tell him that gave me this ; who loved him too,
He struck my soul, and not my body through ;
Tell him, when I am dead, my soul shall be
At peace, if he but think he injured me.

Sull. Shep. In this fount be thy grave. Thou wert not meant
Sure for a woman, thou art so innocent.—

[*Flings her into the well.*

She can not 'scape, for, underneath the ground,
In a long hollow the clear spring is bound,
Till on yon side, where the morn's sun doth look,
The struggling water breaks out in a brook. [*Exit.*

The God of the River rises with AMORET in his arms.

God of the R. What powerful charms my streams do bring
Back again unto their spring,
With such force that I their god,
Three times striking with my rod,
Could not keep them in their ranks ?
My fishes shoot into the banks ;
There's not one that stays and feeds,
All have hid them in the weeds.
Here's a mortal almost dead,
Fall'n into my river-head,
Hallowed so with many a spell,
That till now none ever fell.
'T is a female young and clear,
Cast in by some ravisher :
See, upon her breast a wound,
On which there is no plaster bound.
Yet, she's warm, her pulses beat,
'T is a sign of life and heat. —
If thou be'st a virgin pure,
I can give a present cure :
Take a drop into thy wound,
From my watery locks, more round

Than orient pearl, and far more pure
Than unchaste flesh may endure.—
See, she pants, and from her flesh
The warm blood gusheth out afresh.
She is an unpolluted maid ;
I must have this bleeding stayed.
From my banks I pluck this flower
With holy hand, whose virtuous power
Is at once to heal and draw.

The blood returns. I never saw
A fairer mortal. Now doth break
Her deadly slumber.— Virgin, speak.

Amo. Who hath restored my sense, given me new breath,
And brought me back out of the arms of death?

God of the R. I have healed thy wounds.

Amo. Aye, me !

God of the R. Fear not him that succoured thee.

I am this fountain's god : below,
My waters to a river grow,
And 'twixt two banks with osiers set,
That only prosper in the wet,
Through the meadows do they glide,
Wheeling still on every side,
Sometimes winding round about,
To find the evenest channel out.
And if thou wilt go with me,
Leaving mortal company,
In the cool streams shalt thou lie,
Free from harm as well as I :
I will give thee for thy food
No fish that useth in the mud ;
But trout and pike, that love to swim
Where the gravel from the brim
Through the pure streams may be seen ;
Orient pearl fit for a queen,
Will I give, thy love to win,
And a shell to keep them in ;
Not a fish in all my brook
That shall disobey thy look,
But, when thou wilt, come sliding by,
And from thy white hand take a fly :
And, to make thee understand
How I can my waves command,
They shall bubble, whilst I sing,
Sweeter than the silver string.

[*Sings.*] Do not fear to put thy feet
Naked in the river sweet ;
Think not leech, or newt, or toad,
Will bite thy foot, when thou hast trod ;
Nor let the water rising high,
As thou wad'st in, make thee cry
And sob ; but ever live with me,
And not a wave shall trouble thee.

Amo. Immortal power, that rul'st this holy flood,
I know myself unworthy to be wooed
By thee, a god ; for ere this, but for thee,
I should have shown my weak mortality :
Besides, by holy oath betwixt us twain,
I am betrothed unto a shepherd-swain,
Whose comely face, I know, the gods above
May make me leave to see, but not to love.

God of the R. May he prove to thee as true !
Fairest virgin, now adieu :
I must make my waters fly,
Lest they leave their channels dry,
And beasts that come unto the spring
Miss their morning's watering ;
Which I would not ; for of late
All the neighbour-people sate
On my banks, and from the fold
Two white lambs of three weeks old
Offered to my deity ;
For which this year they shall be free
From raging floods, that as they pass
Leave their gravel in the grass ;
Nor shall their meads be overflown
When their grass is newly mown.

Amo. For thy kindness to me shown,
Never from thy banks be blown
Any tree, with windy force,
Cross thy streams, to stop thy course ;
May no beast that comes to drink,
With his horns cast down thy brink ;
May none that for thy fish do look,
Cut thy banks to dam thy brook ;
Barefoot may no neighbour wade
In thy cool streams, wife nor maid,
When the spawns on stones do lie,
To wash their hemp, and spoil the fry !

God of the R. Thanks, virgin. I must down again.
 Thy wound will put thee to no pain :
 Wonder not so soon 't is gone ;
 A holy hand was laid upon.

[*Descends.*

Amo. And I, unhappy born to be,
 Must follow him that flies from me.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I. — PART OF THE WOOD

Enter PERIGOT.

PERI. She is untrue, unconstant, and unkind ;
 She's gone, she's gone ! Blow high, thou northwest
 wind,
 And raise the sea to mountains ; let the trees
 That dare oppose thy raging fury leese ¹
 Their firm foundation ; creep into the earth,
 And shake the world, as at the monstrous birth
 Of some new prodigy ; whilst I constant stand,
 Holding this trusty boar-spear in my hand,
 And falling thus upon it. [*Offers to fall on his spear.*

Enter AMARILLIS running.

Amar. Stay thy dead-doing hand ! thou art too hot
 Against thyself. Believe me, comely swain,
 If that thou diest, not all the showers of rain
 The heavy clouds send down can wash away
 That foul unmanly guilt the world will lay
 Upon thee. Yet thy love untainted stands :
 Believe me, she is constant ; not the sands
 Can be so hardly ² numbered as she won.
 I do not trifle, shepherd ; by the moon,
 And all those lesser lights our eyes do view,
 And all I told thee, Perigot, is true :
 Then, be a free man ; put away despair
 And will to die ; smooth gently up that fair,
 Dejected forehead ; be as when those eyes
 Took the first heat.

Peri. Alas, he double dies¹ Lose.² With difficulty.

That would believe, but can not ! 'Tis not well
 You keep me thus from dying, here to dwell
 With many worse companions. But, oh, death !
 I am not yet enamoured of this breath
 So much but I dare leave it ; 't is not pain
 In forcing of a wound, nor after-gain
 Of many days, can hold me from my will :
 'T is not myself, but Amoret, bids kill.

Amar. Stay but a little, little ; but one hour ;
 And if I do not show thee, through the power
 Of herbs and words I have, as dark as night,
 Myself turned to thy Amoret, in sight,
 Her very figure, and the robe she wears,
 With tawny buskins, and the hook she bears
 Of thine own carving, where your names are set,
 Wrought underneath with many a curious fret,
 The primrose-chaplet, tawdry-lace,¹ and ring,
 Thou gav'st her for her singing, with each thing
 Else that she wears about her, let me feel
 The first fell stroke of that revenging steel !

Peri. I am contented, if there be a hope,
 To give it entertainment for the scope
 Of one poor hour. Go ; you shall find me next
 Under yon shady beech, even thus perplexed,
 And thus believing.

Amar. Bind, before I go,
 Thy soul by Pan unto me, not to do
 Harm or outrageous wrong upon thy life,
 Till my return.

Peri. By Pan, and by the strife
 He had with Phoebus for the mastery,
 When golden Midas judged their minstrelsy,
 I will not !

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER—
 CLORIN DISCOVERED IN THE BOWER

Enter SATYR carrying ALEXIS.

Sat. Softly gliding as I go,
 With this burthen full of woe,
 Through still silence of the night,
 Guided by the glow-worm's light,
 Hither am I come at last.
 Many a thicket have I past ;

¹ A rural necklace, sold at the St. Awdry, or St. Ethelred, fairs.

Not a twig that durst deny me,
Not a bush that durst descry me
To the little bird that sleeps
On the tender spray; nor creeps
That hardy worm with pointed tail,
But if I be under sail,
Flying faster than the wind,
Leaving all the clouds behind,
But doth hide her tender head
In some hollow tree, or bed
Of seeded nettles; not a hare
Can be started from his fare
By my footing; nor a wish
Is more sudden, nor a fish
Can be found with greater ease
Cut the vast unbounded seas,
Leaving neither print nor sound,
Than I, when nimbly on the ground
I measure many a league an hour.
But, behold, the happy power
That must ease me of my charge,
And by holy hand enlarge
The soul of this sad man, that yet
Lies fast bound in deadly fit:
Heaven and great Pan succour it! —
Hail, thou beauty of the bower,
Whiter than the paramour
Of my master! Let me crave
Thy virtuous help, to keep from grave
This poor mortal, that here lies,
Waiting when the Destinies
Will undo his thread of life:
View the wound, by cruel knife
Trenched into him.

Clo. [*Coming from the bower.*] What art thou call'st me
from my holy rites,
And with the feared name of death affrights
My tender ears? Speak me thy name and will.

Sat. I am the Satyr that did fill
Your lap with early fruit; and will,
When I hap to gather more,
Bring you better and more store.
Yet I come not empty now:
See, a blossom from the bough;
But beshrew his heart that pulled it,

And his perfect sight that culled it
From the other springing blooms !
For a sweeter youth the grooms
Can not show me, nor the downs,
Nor the many neighbouring towns.
Low in yonder glade I found him ;
Softly in mine arms I bound him ;
Hither have I brought him sleeping
In a trance, his wounds fresh weeping,
In remembrance such youth may
Spring and perish in a day.

Clo. Satyr, they wrong thee that do term thee rude ;
Though thou be'st outward-rough and tawny-hued,
Thy manners are as gentle and as fair
As his who brags himself born only heir
To all humanity. Let me see the wound :
This herb will stay the current, being bound
Fast to the orifice, and this restrain
Ulcers and swellings, and such inward pain
As the cold air hath forced into the sore ;
This to draw out such putrefying gore
As inward falls.

Sat. Heaven grant it may do good !

Clo. Fairly wipe away the blood :
Hold him gently, till I fling
Water of a virtuous spring
On his temples ; turn him twice
To the moonbeams ; pinch him thrice ;
That the labouring soul may draw
From his great eclipse.

Sat. I saw
His eyelids moving.

Clo. Give him breath ;
All the danger of cold death
Now is vanished ; with this plaster,
And this unction do I master
All the festered ill that may
Give him grief another day.

Sat. See, he gathers up his sprite,
And begins to hunt for light ;
Now he gapes and breathes again :
How the blood runs to the vein
That erst was empty !

Alexis. O my heart !
My dearest, dearest Cloe ! Oh, the smart

Runs through my side ! I feel some pointed thing
Pass through my bowels, sharper than the sting
Of scorpion. —

Pan, preserve me ! — What are you ?

Do not hurt me : I am true

To my Cloe, though she fly,

And leave me to this destiny :

There she stands, and will not lend

Her smooth white hand to help her friend.

But I am much mistaken, for that face

Bears more austerity and modest grace,

More reproving and more awe,

Than these eyes yet ever saw

In my Cloe. Oh, my pain

Eagerly renews again !

Give me your help for his sake you love best.

Clo. Shepherd, thou canst not possibly take rest,

Till thou hast laid aside all heats, desires,

Provoking thoughts that stir up lusty fires,

Commerce with wanton eyes, strong blood, and will

To execute ; these must be purged until

The vein grow whiter ; then repent, and pray

Great Pan to keep you from the like decay,

And I shall undertake your cure with ease ;

Till when, this virtuous plaster will displease

Your tender sides. Give me your hand, and rise !

Help him a little, Satyr ; for his thighs

Yet are feeble.

Alexis. [*Rising.*] Sure, I have lost much blood.

Sat. 'T is no matter ; 't was not good.

Mortal, you must leave your wooing :

Though there be a joy in doing,

Yet it brings much grief behind it ;

They best feel it, that do find it.

Clo. Come, bring him in ; I will attend his sore. —

When you are well, take heed you lust no more.

[*ALEXIS is led into the bower.*]

Sat. Shepherd, see, what comes of kissing ;

By my head, 't were better missing.

Brightest, if there be remaining

Any service, without feigning

I will do it ; were I set

To catch the nimble wind, or get

Shadows gliding on the green,

Or to steal from the great queen

Of fairies all her beauty ;
I would do it, so much duty
Do I owe those precious eyes.

Clo. I thank thee, honest Satyr. If the cries
Of any other, that be hurt or ill,
Draw thee unto them, prithee, do thy will
To bring them hither.

Sat. I will ; and when the weather
Serves to angle in the brook,
I will bring a silver hook,
With a line of finest silk,
And a rod as white as milk,
To deceive the little fish :
So I take my leave, and wish
On this bower may ever dwell
Spring and summer !

Clo. Friend, farewell.

[*Exit SATYR.*]

SCENE III.—PART OF THE WOOD WITH THE HOLY WELL

Enter AMORET.

Amo. This place is ominous ; for here I lost
My love and almost life, and since have crost
All these woods over ; ne'er a nook or dell,
Where any little bird or beast doth dwell,
But I have sought it ; ne'er a bending brow
Of any hill, or glade the wind sings through,
Nor a green bank, or shade where shepherds use
To sit and riddle, sweetly pipe, or choose
Their valentines, that I have missed, to find
My love in. Perigot ! Oh, too unkind,
Why hast thou fled me ? whither art thou gone ?
How have I wronged thee ? was my love alone
To thee worthy this scorned recompense ? 'T is well ;
I am content to feel it. But I tell
Thee, shepherd, and these lusty woods shall hear,
Forsaken Amoret is yet as clear
Of any stranger fire, as heaven is
From foul corruption, or the deep abyss
From light and happiness ; and thou mayst know
All this for truth, and how that fatal blow
Thou gav'st me, never from desert of mine
Fell on my life, but from suspect of thine,
Or fury more than madness : therefore here,
Since I have lost my life, my love, my dear,

Upon this cursed place, and on this green
That first divorced us, shortly shall be seen
A sight of so great pity, that each eye
Shall daily spend his spring in memory
Of my untimely fall.

Enter AMARILLIS.

Amar. I am not blind,
Nor is it through the working of my mind
That this shows Amoret. Forsake me, all
That dwell upon the soul, but what men call
Wonder, or, more than wonder, miracle !
For, sure, so strange as this, the oracle
Never gave answer of ; it passeth dreams,
Or madmen's fancy, when the many streams
Of new imaginations rise and fall :
'T is but an hour since these ears heard her call
For pity to young Perigot ; whilst he
Directed by his fury, bloodily
Lanced¹ up her breast, which bloodless fell and cold ;
And, if belief may credit what was told,
After all this, the melancholy swain
Took her into his arms, being almost slain,
And to the bottom of the holy well
Flung her, for ever with the waves to dwell.
'T is she, the very same ; 't is Amoret,
And living yet ; the great powers will not let
Their virtuous love be crossed. [*Aside.*] — Maid, wipe away
Those heavy drops of sorrow, and allay
The storm that yet goes high, which, not deprest,
Breaks heart and life and all before it rest.
Thy Perigot —

Amo. Where, which is Perigot ?

Amar. Sits there below, lamenting much, God wot,
Thee and thy fortune. Go, and comfort him ;
And thou shalt find him underneath a brim
Of sailing pines, that edge yon mountain in.

Amo. I go, I run. Heaven grant me I may win
His soul again !

[*Exit.*

Enter Sullen Shepherd.

Sull. Shep. Stay, Amarillis, stay !
You are too fleet ; 't is two hours yet to day.

¹ Lanced.

I have performed my promise ; let us sit
And warm our bloods together, till the fit
Come lively on us.

Amar. Friend, you are too keen ;
The morning riseth, and we shall be seen ;
Forbear a little.

Sull. Shep. I can stay no longer.

Amar. Hold, shepherd, hold ! learn not to be a wronger
Of your word. Was not your promise laid,
To break their loves first ?

Sull. Shep. I have done it, maid.

Amar. No ; they are yet unbroken, met again,
And are as hard to part yet as the stain
Is from the finest lawn.

Sull. Shep. I say, they are
Now at this present parted, and so far
That they shall never meet.

Amar. Swain, 't is not so ;
For do but to yon hanging mountain go,
And there believe your eyes.

Sull. Shep. You do but hold
Off with delays and trifles. — Farewell, cold
And frozen bashfulness, unfit for men ! —

Thus I salute thee, virgin !

[*Attempts to seize her.*]

Amar. And thus, then,

I bid you follow : catch me if you can !

[*Exit running.*]

Sull. Shep. And, if I stay behind, I am no man !

[*Exit, running after her.*]

SCENE IV.—A DALE IN THE WOOD

Enter PERIGOT.

Peri. Night, do not steal away ; I woo thee yet
To hold a hard hand o'er the rusty bit
That guides thy lazy team. Go back again,
Boötes, thou that driv'st thy frozen wain
Round as a ring, and bring a second night,
To hide my sorrows from the coming light ;
Let not the eyes of men stare on my face,
And read my falling ; give me some black place,
Where never sunbeam shot his wholesome light,
That I may sit and pour out my sad sprite
Like running water, never to be known
After the forcèd fall and sound is gone.

Enter AMORET.

Amo. This is the bottom. — Speak, if thou be here,
My Perigot! Thy Amoret, thy dear,
Calls on thy loved name.

Peri. What art thou dare
Tread these forbidden paths, where death and care
Dwell on the face of darkness?

Amo. 'Tis thy friend,
Thy Amoret, come hither, to give end
To these consumings. Look up, gentle boy:
I have forgot those pains and dear annoy
I suffered for thy sake, and am content
To be thy love again. Why hast thou rent
Those curled locks, where I have often hung
Ribbons and damask-roses, and have flung
Waters distilled, to make thee fresh and gay,
Sweeter than nosegays on a bridal day?
Why dost thou cross thine arms, and hang thy face
Down to thy bosom, letting fall apace
From those two little heavens, upon the ground,
Showers of more price, more orient, and more round,
Than those that hang upon the moon's pale brow?
Cease these complainings, shepherd: I am now
The same I ever was, as kind and free,
And can forgive before you ask of me;
Indeed, I can and will.

Peri. So spoke my fair!
Oh, you great working powers of earth and air,
Water and forming fire, why have you lent
Your hidden virtues of so ill intent?
Even such a face, so fair, so bright of hue,
Had Amoret; such words, so smooth and new,
Came flowing from her tongue; such was her eye,
And such the pointed sparkle that did fly
Forth like a bleeding shaft; all is the same,
The robe and buskins, painted hook, and frame
Of all her body. Oh me, Amoret!

Amo. Shepherd, what means this riddle? who hath set
So strong a difference 'twixt myself and me,
That I am grown another? Look, and see
The ring thou gav'st me, and about my wrist
That curious bracelet thou thyself didst twist
From those fair tresses. Know'st thou Amoret?
Hath not some newer love forced thee forget
Thy ancient faith?

Peri. Still nearer to my love !
These be the very words she oft did prove
Upon my temper ; so she still would take
Wonder into her face, and silent make
Signs with her head and hand, as who would say,
"Shepherd, remember this another day."

Amo. Am I not Amoret? where was I lost?
Can there be heaven, and time, and men, and most
Of these inconstant? Faith, where art thou fled?
Are all the vows and protestations dead,
The hands held up, the wishes and the heart?
Is there not one remaining, not a part
Of all these to be found? Why, then, I see
Men never knew that virtue, constancy.

Peri. Men ever were most blessed, till cross fate
Brought love and woman forth, unfortunate
To all that ever tasted of their smiles ;
Whose actions are all double, full of wiles ;
Like to the subtle hare, that 'fore the hounds
Makes many turnings, leaps and many rounds,
This way and that way, to deceive the scent
Of her pursuers.

Amo. 'T is but to prevent
Their speedy coming on, that seek her fall ;
The hands of cruel men, more bestial,
And of a nature more refusing good
Than beasts themselves or fishes of the flood.

Peri. Thou art all these, and more than nature meant
When she created all ; frowns, joys, content ;
Extreme fire for an hour, and presently
Colder than sleepy poison, or the sea
Upon whose face sits a continual frost ;
Your actions ever driven to the most,
Then down again as low, that none can find
The rise or falling of a woman's mind.

Amo. Can there be any age, or days, or time,
Or tongues of men, guilty so great a crime
As wronging simple maid? Oh, Perigot,
Thou that wast yesterday without a blot ;
Thou that wast every good and every thing
That men called blessed ; thou that wast the spring
From whence our looser grooms drew all their best ;
Thou that wast always just and always blest
In faith and promise ; thou that hadst the name
Of virtuous given thee, and made good the same

Even from thy cradle ; thou that wast that all
That men delighted in ! Oh, what a fall
Is this, to have been so, and now to be
The only best in wrong and infamy !
And I to live to know this ! and by me,
That loved thee dearer than mine eyes, or that
Which we esteemed our honour, virgin-state !
Dearer than swallows love the early morn,
Or dogs of chase the sound of merry horn ;
Dearer than thou canst love thy new love, if thou hast
Another, and far dearer than the last ;
Dearer than thou canst love thyself, though all
The self-love were within thee that did fall
With that coy swain that now is made a flower,
For whose dear sake Echo weeps many a shower !
And am I thus rewarded for my flame ?
Loved worthily to get a wanton's name ?
Come, thou forsaken willow, wind my head,
And noise it to the world, my love is dead !
I am forsaken, I am cast away,
And left for every lazy groom to say
I was unconstant, light, and sooner lost
Than the quick clouds we see, or the chill frost
When the hot sun beats on it ! Tell me yet,
Canst thou not love again thy Amoret ?

Peri. Thou art not worthy of that blessed name :
I must not know thee : fling thy wanton flame
Upon some lighter blood that may be hot
With words and feigned passions ; Perigot
Was ever yet unstained, and shall not now
Stoop to the meltings of a borrowed brow.

Amo. Then hear me, Heaven, to whom I call for right,
And you, fair twinkling stars, that crown the night ;
And hear me, woods, and silence of this place,
And ye, sad hours, that move a sullen pace ;
Hear me, ye shadows, that delight to dwell
In horrid darkness, and ye powers of hell,
Whilst I breathe out my last ! I am that maid,
That yet-untainted Amoret, that played
The careless prodigal, and gave away
My soul to this young man that now dares say
I am a stranger, not the same, more wild ;
And thus with much belief I was beguiled :
I am that maid, that have delayed, denied,
And almost scorned the loves of all that tried

To win me, but this swain ; and yet confess
I have been wooed by many with no less
Soul of affection ; and have often had
Rings, belts, and cracknels, sent me from the lad
That feeds his flocks down westward ; lambs and doves
By young Alexis ; Daphnis sent me gloves ;
All which I gave to thee : nor these nor they
That sent them did I smile on, or e'er lay
Up to my after-memory. But why
Do I resolve to grieve, and not to die ?
Happy had been the stroke thou gav'st, if home ;
By this time had I found a quiet room,
Where every slave is free, and every breast,
That living bred new care, now lies at rest ;
And thither will poor Amoret.

Peri. Thou must.

Was ever any man so loath to trust
His eyes as I? or was there ever yet
Any so like as this to Amoret?
For whose dear sake I promise, if there be
A living soul within thee, thus to free
Thy body from it! [*Wounds her with his spear.*]

Amo. [Falling.] So, this work hath end.
Farewell, and live; be constant to thy friend
That loves thee next.

Enter SATYR ; PERIGOT runs off.

Sat. See, the day begins to break,
And the light shoots like a streak
Of subtle fire ; the wind blows cold,
Whilst the morning doth unfold ;
Now the birds begin to rouse,
And the squirrel from the boughs
Leaps, to get him nuts and fruit ;
The early lark, that erst was mute,
Carols to the rising day
Many a note and many a lay :
Therefore here I end my watch,
Lest the wandering swain should catch
Harm, or lose himself.

Amo. Ah me !

Sat. Speak again, whate'er thou be;
I am ready; speak, I say;
By the dawning of the day,
By the power of night and Pan,

I enforce thee speak again !

Amo. Oh, I am most unhappy !

Sat. Yet more blood !

Sure, these wanton swains are wood.¹

Can there be a hand or heart

Dare commit so vile a part

As this murder ? By the moon,

That hid herself when this was done,

Never was a sweeter face :

I will bear her to the place

Where my goddess keeps,² and crave

Her to give her life or grave.

[*Exit, carrying AMORET.*]

SCENE V.—THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER

Enter CLORIN.

Clo. Here whilst one patient takes his rest secure,

I steal abroad to do another cure. —

Pardon, thou buried body of my love,

That from thy side I dare so soon remove ;

I will not prove unconstant, nor will leave

Thee for an hour alone : when I deceive

My first-made vow, the wildest of the wood

Tear me, and o'er thy grave let out my blood !

I go by wit to cure a lover's pain,

Which no herb can ; being done, I'll come again.

[*Exit.*]

Enter THENOT.

The. Poor shepherd, in this shade for ever lie,

And seeing thy fair Clorin's cabin, die !

[*Lying down.*]

Oh, hapless love, which being answered, ends !

And, as a little infant cries and bends

His tender brows, when, rolling of his eye,

He hath espied something that glisters nigh,

Which he would have, yet, give it him, away

He throws it straight, and cries afresh to play

With something else ; such my affection, set

On that which I should loathe, if I could get.

Re-enter CLORIN.

Clo. See, where he lies ! Did ever man but he

Love any woman for her constancy

To her dead lover, which she needs must end

¹ Mad.

² Dwells.

Before she can allow him for her friend,
And he himself must needs the cause destroy
For which he loves, before he can enjoy?
Poor shepherd, Heaven grant I at once may free
Thee from thy pain, and keep my loyalty! —
Shepherd, look up.

[*Aside.*

The. Thy brightness doth amaze;
So Phœbus may at noon bid mortals gaze;
Thy glorious constancy appears so bright,
I dare not meet the beams with my weak sight.

Clo. Why dost thou pine away thyself for me?

The. Why dost thou keep such spotless constancy?

Clo. Thou holy shepherd, see what for thy sake
Clorin, thy Clorin, now dare undertake.

The. [*Starting up.*] Stay there, thou constant Clorin! if
there be

Yet any part of woman left in thee,
To make thee light, think yet before thou speak.

Clo. See, what a holy vow for thee I break;
I, that already have my fame far spread
For being constant to my lover dead.

The. Think yet, dear Clorin, of your love; how true,
If you had died, he would have been to you.

Clo. Yet, all I'll lose for thee —

The. Think but how blest
A constant woman is above the rest!

Clo. And offer up myself, here on this ground,
To be disposed by thee.

The. Why dost thou wound
His heart with malice against women more,
That hated all the sex but thee before?
How much more pleasant had it been to me
To die than to behold this change in thee!
Yet, yet return; let not the woman sway!

Clo. Insult not on her now, nor use delay,
Who for thy sake hath ventured all her fame.

The. Thou hast not ventured, but bought certain shame:
Your sex's curse, foul falsehood, must and shall,
I see, once in your lives, light on you all.
I hate thee now. Yet turn!

Clo. Be just to me:
Shall I at once lose both my fame and thee?

The. Thou hadst no fame; that which thou didst like good
Was but thy appetite that swayed thy blood
For that time to the best: for as a blast

That through a house comes, usually doth cast
Things out of order, yet by chance may come,
And blow some one thing to his proper room,
So did thy appetite, and not thy zeal,
Sway thee by chance to do some one thing well.
Yet turn !

Clo. Thou dost but try me, if I would
Forsake thy dear embraces for my old
Love's, though he were alive : but do not fear.

The. I do contemn thee now, and dare come near,
And gaze upon thee ; for methinks that grace,
Austerity, which sate upon that face,
Is gone, and thou like others. False maid, see,
This is the gain of foul inconstancy !

[Exit

Clo. 'T is done : — great Pan, I give thee thanks for it ! —
What art could not have healed is cured by wit.

Re-enter THENOT.

The. Will you be constant yet ? will you remove
Into the cabin to your buried love ?

Clo. No, let me die, but by thy side remain.

The. There's none shall know that thou didst ever stain
Thy worthy strictness, but shalt honoured be,
And I will lie again under this tree,
And pine and die for thee with more delight
Than I have sorrow now to know thee light.

Clo. Let me have thee, and I'll be where thou wilt.

The. Thou art of women's race, and full of guilt.
Farewell all hope of that sex ! Whilst I thought
There was one good, I feared to find one naught :
But since their minds I all alike espy,
Henceforth I'll choose, as others, by mine eye.

[Exit

Clo. Blest be ye powers that gave such quick redress,
And for my labours sent so good success !
I rather choose, though I a woman be,
He should speak ill of all than die for me.

[Exit into the bower.

ACT V

SCENE I.—A VILLAGE

Enter Priest of Pan and Old Shepherd.

PRIST. Shepherds, rise, and shake off sleep !
 See, the blushing morn doth peep
 Through the windows, whilst the sun
 To the mountain-tops is run,
 Gilding all the vales below
 With his rising flames, which grow
 Greater by his climbing still.
 Up, ye lazy grooms, and fill
 Bag and bottle for the field !
 Clasp your cloaks fast, lest they yield
 To the bitter north-east wind.
 Call the maidens up, and find
 Who lay longest, that she may
 Go without a friend all day ;
 Then reward your dogs, and pray
 Pan to keep you from decay :
 So unfold, and then away !
 What, not a shepherd stirring ? Sure, the grooms
 Have found their beds too easy, or the rooms
 Filled with such new delight and heat, that they
 Have both forgot their hungry sheep and day.
 Knock, that they may remember what a shame
 Sloth and neglect lays on a shepherd's name.

Old Shep. [*After knocking at several doors.*] It is to little
 purpose ; not a swain
 This night hath known his lodging here, or lain
 Within these cotes : the woods, or some near town
 That is a neighbour to the bordering down,
 Hath drawn them thither, 'bout some lusty sport,
 Or spiced wassail-bowl, to which resort
 All the young men and maids of many a cote,
 Whilst the trim minstrel strikes his merry note.

Priest. God pardon sin ! — Show me the way that leads
 To any of their haunts.

Old Shep. This to the meads,
 And that down to the woods.

Priest. Then, this for me.
 Come, shepherd, let me crave your company.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER

CLORIN and ALEXIS discovered in the bower; at the side of the stage, a hollow tree, in which are CLOE and DAPHNIS.

Clo. Now your thoughts are almost pure,
And your wound begins to cure ;
Strive to vanish all that's vain,
Lest it should break out again.

Alex. Eternal thanks to thee, thou holy maid !
I find my former wandering thoughts well staid
Through thy wise precepts ; and my outward pain
By thy choice herbs is almost gone again :
Thy sex's vice and virtue are revealed
At once ; for what one hurt another healed.

Clo. May thy grief more appease !
Relapses are the worst disease.
Take heed how you in thought offend ;
So mind and body both will mend.

Enter SATYR, carrying AMORET.

Amo. Be'st thou the wildest creature of the wood,
That bear'st me thus away, drowned in my blood
And dying, know I can not injured be ;
I am a maid ; let that name fight for me.

Sat. Fairest virgin, do not fear
Me, that doth thy body bear,
Not to hurt, but healed to be ;
Men are ruder far than we. —
See, fair goddess, in the wood
They have let out yet more blood :
Some savage man hath struck her breast,
So soft and white, that no wild beast
Durst have touched, asleep or 'wake ;
So sweet, that adder, newt, or snake,
Would have lain, from arm to arm,
On her bosom to be warm
All a night, and, being hot,
Gone away, and stung her not.
Quickly clap herbs to her breast.
A man, sure, is a kind of beast.

Clo. With spotless hand on spotless breast
I put these herbs, to give thee rest :
Which till it heal thee, there will bide,
If both be pure ; if not, off slide. —
See, it falls off from the wound !

Shepherdess, thou art not sound,
Full of lust.

Sat. Who would have thought it?
So fair a face!

Clo. Why, that hath brought it.

Amo. For aught I know or think, these words my last,
Yet, Pan so help me as my thoughts are chaste!

Clo. And so may Pan bless this my cure,
As all my thoughts are just and pure!
Some uncleanness nigh doth lurk,
That will not let my medicines work. —
Satyr, search if thou can'st find it.

Sat. Here away methinks I wind it:
Stronger yet. — Oh, here they be;
Here, here, in a hollow tree,
Two fond mortals have I found.

Clo. Bring them out; they are unsound.

Sat. [*Bringing out CLOE and DAPHNIS.*] By the fingers thus
I wring ye,
To my goddess thus I bring ye;
Strife is vain, come gently in. —
I scented them; they're full of sin.

Clo. Hold, Satyr; take this glass,
Sprinkle over all the place,
Purge the air from lustful breath,
To save this shepherdess from death:
And stand you still whilst I do dress
Her wound, for fear the pain increase.

Sat. From this glass I throw a drop
Of crystal water on the top
Of every grass, on flowers a pair:
Send a fume, and keep the air
Pure and wholesome, sweet and blest,
Till this virgin's wound be drest.

Clo. Satyr, help to bring her in.

Sat. By Pan, I think she hath no sin,

[*Carrying AMORET into the bower.*]

She is so light. — Lie on these leaves.
Sleep, that mortal sense deceives,
Crown thine eyes and ease thy pain;
May'st thou soon be well again!

Clo. Satyr, bring the shepherd near;
Try him, if his mind be clear,

Sat. Shepherd, come.

Daph. My thoughts are pure.

Sat. The better trial to endure.

Clo. In this flame his finger thrust,
Which will burn him if he lust;
But if not, away will turn,
As loath unspotted flesh to burn. —

[*SATYR applies DAPHNIS's finger to the taper.*
See, it gives back; let him go.

Sat. Farewell, mortal: keep thee so. [Exit DAPHNIS.
Stay, fair nymph: fly not so fast;
We must try if you be chaste. —
Here's a hand that quakes for fear;
Sure, she will not prove so clear.

Clo. Hold her finger to the flame;
That will yield her praise or shame.

Sat. To her doom she dares not stand,

[*Applies CLOE's finger to the taper.*
But plucks away her tender hand;
And the taper darting sends
His hot beams at her fingers' ends. —
Oh, thou art foul within, and hast
A mind, if nothing else, unchaste!

Alex. Is not that Cloe? 'Tis my love, 'tis she!
Cloe, fair Cloe!

Clo. My Alexis!

Alex. He.

Clo. Let me embrace thee.

Clo. Take her hence,
Lest her sight disturb his sense.

Alex. Take not her; take my life first!

Clo. See, his wound again is burst:
Keep her near, here in the wood,
Till I have stopt these streams of blood.

[*SATYR leads off CLOE.*

Soon again he ease shall find,
If I can but still his mind.
This curtain thus I do display,
To keep the piercing air away.

[*Draws a curtain before the bower.*

SCENE III. — A PASTURE

Enter Old Shepherd *and* Priest of Pan.

Priest. Sure, they are lost for ever: 'tis in vain
To find them out with trouble and much pain,
That have a ripe desire and forward will

To fly the company of all but ill.
What shall be counselled now? shall we retire,
Or constant follow still that first desire
We had to find them?

Old Shep. Stay a little while ;
For, if the morning's mist do not beguile
My sight with shadows, sure I see a swain ;
One of this jolly troop's come back again.

Enter THENOT.

Priest. Dost thou not blush, young shepherd, to be known
Thus without care leaving thy flocks alone,
And following what desire and present blood
Shapes out before thy burning sense for good ;
Having forgot what tongue hereafter may
Tell to the world thy falling off, and say
Thou art regardless both of good and shame,
Spurning at virtue and a virtuous name ?
And like a glorious ¹ desperate man, that buys
A poison of much price, by which he dies,
Dost thou lay out for lust, whose only gain
Is foul disease, with present age and pain,
And then a grave? These be the fruits that grow
In such hot veins, that only beat to know
Where they may take most ease, and grow ambitious
Through their own wanton fire and pride delicious.

The. Right holy sir, I have not known this night
What the smooth face of mirth was, or the sight
Of any looseness ; music, joy, and ease,
Have been to me as bitter drugs to please
A stomach lost with weakness, not a game
That I am skilled at thoroughly : nor a dame,
Went her tongue smoother than the feet of time,
Her beauty ever-living like the rhyme
Our blessed Tityrus did sing of yore ;
No, were she more enticing than the store
Of fruitful summer, when the loaden tree
Bids the faint traveller be bold and free ;
'T were but to me like thunder 'gainst the bay,
Whose lightning may enclose, but never stay
Upon his charmed branches ; such am I
Against the catching flames of woman's eye.

Priest. Then, wherefore hast thou wandered?

The. 'T was a vow

¹ Proud.

That drew me out last night, which I have now
Strictly performed, and homewards go to give
Fresh pasture to my sheep, that they may live.

Priest. 'T is good to hear you, shepherd, if the heart
In this well-sounding music bear his part.
Where have you left the rest?

The. I have not seen,
Since yesternight we met upon this green
To fold our flocks up, any of that train;
Yet have I walked those woods round, and have lain
All this long night under an aged tree;
Yet neither wandering shepherd did I see,
Or shepherdess; or drew into mine ear
The sound of living thing, unless it were
The nightingale, among the thick-leaved spring
That sits alone in sorrow, and doth sing
Whole nights away in mourning; or the owl,
Or our great enemy,¹ that still doth howl
Against the moon's cold beams.

Priest. Go, and beware
Of after-falling.

The. Father, 't is my care.

[*Exit.*

Enter DAPHNIS

Old Shep. Here comes another straggler; sure I see
A shame in this young shepherd. — Daphnis?

Daph. He.

Priest. Where hast thou left the rest, that should have been
Long before this grazing upon the green
Their yet-imprisoned flocks?

Daph. Thou holy man,
Give me a little breathing, till I can
Be able to unfold what I have seen;
Such horror, that the like hath never been
Known to the ear of shepherd. Oh, my heart
Labours a double motion to impart
So heavy tidings! You all know the bower
Where the chaste Clorin lives, by whose great power
Sick men and cattle have been often cured;
There lovely Amoret, that was assured
To lusty Perigot, bleeds out her life,
Forced by some iron hand and fatal knife;
And, by her, young Alexis.

¹ The wolf.

Enter AMARILLIS, running.

Amar. If there be
Ever a neighbour-brook or hollow tree,
Receive my body, close me up from lust
That follows at my heels ! Be ever just,
Thou god of shepherds, Pan, for her dear sake
That loves the rivers' brinks, and still doth shake
In cold remembrance of thy quick pursuit ;
Let me be made a reed, and, ever mute,
Nod to the waters' fall, whilst every blast
Sings through my slender leaves that I was chaste !

Priest. This is a night of wonder. — Amarill,
Be comforted : the holy gods are still
Revengeurs of these wrongs.

Amar. Thou blessèd man,
Honoured upon these plains, and loved of Pan,
Hear me, and save from endless infamy
My yet-unblasted flower, virginity !
By all the garlands that have crowned that head,
By that chaste office, and the marriage-bed
That still is blessed by thee ; by all the rites
Due to our god, and by those virgin-lights
That burn before his altar ; let me not
Fall from my former state, to gain the blot
That never shall be purged ! I am not now
That wanton Amarillis : here I vow
To Heaven, and thee, grave father, if I may
'Scape this unhappy night, to know the day
A virgin, never after to endure
The tongues or company of men unpure !
I hear him come ; save me !

Priest. Retire a while
Behind this bush, till we have known that vile
Abuser of young maidens.

[*They retire.*]

Enter Sullen Shepherd.

Sull. Shep. Stay thy pace,
Most lovèd Amarillis ; let the chase
Grow calm and milder ; fly me not so fast :
I fear the pointed brambles have unlaced
Thy golden buskins. Turn again, and see
Thy shepherd follow, that is strong and free,
Able to give thee all content and ease :
I am not bashful, virgin ; I can please
At first encounter, hug thee in mine arm,

And give thee many kisses, soft and warm
 As those the sun prints on the smiling cheek
 Of plums or mellow peaches ; I am sleek
 And smooth as Neptune when stern Æolus
 Locks up his surly winds, and nimbly thus
 Can show my active youth, Why dost thou fly?
 Remember, Amarillis, it was I
 That killed Alexis for thy sake, and set
 An everlasting hate 'twixt Amoret
 And her belovèd Perigot ; 't was I
 That drowned her in the well, where she must lie
 Till time shall leave ' to be. Then, turn again,
 Turn with thy open arms, and clip the swain
 That hath performed all this ; turn, turn, I say :
 I must not be deluded.

Priest. [*Coming forward.*] Monster, stay !
 Thou that art like a canker to the state
 Thou liv'st and breath'st in, eating with debate*
 Through every honest bosom, forcing still
 The veins of any that may serve thy will ;
 Thou that hast offered with a sinful hand
 To seize upon this virgin, that doth stand
 Yet trembling here !

Sull. Shep. Good holiness, declare
 What had the danger been, if being bare
 I had embraced her ; tell me, by your art,
 What coming wonders would that sight impart ?

Priest. Lust and a branded soul.

Sull. Shep. Yet, tell me more ;
 Hath not our mother Nature, for her store
 And great encrease, said it is good and just,
 And willed that every living creature must
 Beget his like ?

Priest. You're better read than I,
 I must confess, in blood and lechery. —
 Now to the bower, and bring this beast along,
 Where he may suffer penance for his wrong.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. — PART OF THE WOOD

Enter PERIGOT, with his hand bloody.

Peri. Here will I wash it in the morning's dew,
 Which she on every little grass doth strew

* Cease.

* Discord.

In silver drops against the sun's appear :
'T is holy water, and will make me clear.
My hand will not be cleansed. — My wrongèd love,
If thy chaste spirit in the air yet move,
Look mildly down on him that yet doth stand
All full of guilt, thy blood upon his hand ;
And though I struck thee undeservedly,
Let my revenge on her that injured thee
Make less a fault which I intended not,
And let these dewdrops wash away my spot ! —
It will not cleanse. Oh, to what sacred flood
Shall I resort, to wash away this blood ?
Amidst these trees the holy Clorin dwells,
In a low cabin of cut boughs, and heals
All wounds : to her I will myself address,
And my rash faults repentantly confess ;
Perhaps she'll find a means, by art or prayer,
To make my hand, with chaste blood stained, fair.
That done, not far hence, underneath some tree
I'll have a little cabin built, since she
Whom I adored is dead ; there will I give
Myself to strictness, and, like Clorin, live.

[Exit.

SCENE V. — THE WOOD BEFORE CLORIN'S BOWER

CLORIN *discovered sitting in the Bower*, AMORET *sitting on one side of her*, ALEXIS and CLOE *on the other* ; SATYR *standing by*.

Clo. Shepherd, once more your blood is staid :
Take example by this maid,
Who is healed ere you be pure ;
So hard it is lewd lust to cure.
Take heed, then, how you turn your eye
On this other lustfully. —
And, shepherdess, take heed lest you
Move his willing eye thereto :
Let no wring, nor pinch, nor smile
Of yours, his weaker sense beguile. —
Is your love yet true and chaste,
And for ever so to last ?

Alex. I have forgot all vain desires,
All looser thoughts, ill-tempered fires :
True love I find a pleasant fume,
Whose moderate heat can ne'er consume.

Cloe. And I a new fire feel in me,
Whose chaste flame is not quenched to be.

Clo. Join your hands with modest touch,
And forever keep you such.

Enter PERIGOT.

Peri. Yon is her cabin : thus far off I'll stand,
And call her forth ; for my unhallowed hand
I dare not bring so near yon sacred place. —
Clorin, come forth, and do a timely grace
To a poor swain.

[*Aside.*

Clo. What art thou that dost call?
Clorin is ready to do good to all :
Come near.

Peri. I dare not.

Clo. Satyr, see
Who it is that calls on me.

Sat. [*Coming from the bower.*] There, at hand, some swain
doth stand,
Stretching out a bloody hand.

Peri. Come, Clorin, bring thy holy waters clear,
To wash my hand.

Clo. [*Coming out.*] What wonders have been here
To-night ! Stretch forth thy hand, young swain ;
Wash and rub it, whilst I rain
Holy water.

Peri. Still you pour,
But my hand will never scour.

Clo. Satyr, bring him to the bower :
We will try the sovereign power
Of other waters.

Sat. Mortal, sure,
'Tis the blood of maiden pure
That stains thee so.

*SATYR leads him to the bower, where, seeing AMORET, he kneels
down before her.*

Peri. Whate'er thou be,
Be'st thou her sprite, or some divinity,
That in her shape thinks good to walk this grove,
Pardon poor Perigot?

Amo. I am thy love,
Thy Amoret, for evermore thy love :
Strike once more on my naked breast, I'll prove
As constant still. Oh, couldst thou love me yet,
How soon could I my former griefs forget !

Peri. So over-great with joy that you live, now

I am, that no desire of knowing how
Doth seize me. Hast thou still power to forgive?

Amo. Whilst thou hast power to love, or I to live:
More welcome now than hadst thou never gone
Astray from me!

Peri. And when thou lov'st alone,
And not I thee, death, or some lingering pain
That's worse, light on me!

Clo. Now your stain
Perhaps will cleanse thee; once again.
See, the blood that erst did stay,
With the water drops away.
All the powers again are pleased,
And with this new knot are appeased.
Join your hands, and rise together:
Pan be blessed that brought you hither!

Enter Priest of Pan and Old Shepherd.

Go back again, whate'er thou art; unless
Smooth maiden-thoughts possess thee, do not press
This hallowed ground. — Go, Satyr, take his hand,
And give him present trial.

Sat. Mortal, stand,
Till by fire I have made known
Whether thou be such a one
That mayst freely tread this place.
Hold thy hand up. — Never was

[Applying the Priest's hand to the taper.]

More untainted flesh than this.
Fairest, he is full of bliss.

Clo. Then boldly speak, why dost thou seek this place?

Priest. First, honoured virgin, to behold thy face,
Where all good dwells that is; next, for to try
The truth of late report was given to me, —
Those shepherds that have met with foul mischance
Through much neglect and more ill governance,
Whether the wounds they have may yet endure
The open air, or stay a longer cure;
And lastly, what the doom may be shall light
Upon those guilty wretches, through whose spite
All this confusion fell; for to this place,
Thou holy maiden, have I brought the race
Of these offenders, who have freely told
Both why and by what means they gave this bold
Attempt upon their lives.

Clo. Fume all the ground,
And sprinkle holy water, for unsound
And foul infection 'gins to fill the air :
It gathers yet more strongly ; take a pair

[*SATYR fumes the ground, etc.*

Of censers filled with frankincense and myrrh,
Together with cold camphire : quickly stir
Thee, gentle Satyr, for the place begins
To sweat and labour with th' abhorred sins
Of those offenders : let them not come nigh,
For full of itching flame and leprosy
Their very souls are, that the ground goes back,
And shrinks to feel the sullen weight of black
And so unheard-of venom. — Hie thee fast,
Thou holy man, and banish from the chaste
These manlike monsters ; let them never more
Be known upon these downs, but, long before
The next sun's rising, put them from the sight
And memory of every honest wight :
Be quick in expedition, lest the sores
Of these weak patients break into new gores.

[*Exit Priest of Pan.*

Peri. My dear, dear Amoret, how happy are
Those blessed pairs, in whom a little jar
Hath bred an everlasting love, too strong
For time, or steel, or envy to do wrong !
How do you feel your hurts ? Alas, poor heart,
How much I was abused ! Give me the smart,
For it is justly mine.

Amo. I do believe :
It is enough, dear friend ; leave off to grieve,
And let us once more, in despite of ill,
Give hands and hearts again.

Peri. With better will
Than e'er I went to find in hottest day
Cool crystal of the fountain, to allay
My eager thirst. May this band never break !
Hear us, oh, Heaven !

Amo. Be constant.

Peri. Else Pan wreak
With double vengeance my disloyalty !
Let me not dare to know the company
Of men, or any more behold those eyes !

Amo. Thus, shepherd, with a kiss all envy ' dies.

Re-enter Priest of Pan.

Priest. Bright maid, I have performed your will. The swain
In whom such heat and black rebellions reign
Hath undergone your sentence and disgrace :
Only the maid I have reserved, whose face
Shows much amendment ; many a tear doth fall
In sorrow of her fault : great fair, recall
Your heavy doom, in hope of better days,
Which I dare promise ; once again upraise
Her heavy spirit, that near drownèd lies
In self-consuming care that never dies.

Clo. I am content to pardon ; call her in. —

[*Priest of Pan brings in AMARILLES.*

The air grows cool again, and doth begin
To purge itself : how bright the day doth show
After this stormy cloud ! — Go, Satyr, go,
And with this taper boldly try her hand :
If she be pure and good, and firmly stand
To be so still, we have performed a work
Worthy the gods themselves.

Sat. Come forward, maiden, do not lurk,
Nor hide your face with grief and shame ;
Now or never get a name
That may raise thee, and re-cure
All thy life that was impure.
Hold your hand unto the flame ;
If thou be'st a perfect dame,
Or hast truly vowed to mend,
This pale fire will be thy friend. —

[*Applies her hand to the taper.*

See, the taper hurts her not !
Go thy ways ; let never spot
Henceforth seize upon thy blood :
Thank the gods, and still be good.

Clo. Young shepherdess, now you are brought again
To virgin-state, be so, and so remain
To thy last day, unless the faithful love
Of some good shepherd force thee to remove ;
Then labour to be true to him, and live
As such a one that ever strives to give
A blessed memory to after-time ;
Be famous for your good, not for your crime. —
Now, holy man, I offer up again
These patients, full of health and free from pain :
Keep them from after-ills ; be ever near

Unto their actions ; teach them how to clear
The tedious way they pass through from suspect ;
Keep them from wronging others, or neglect
Of duty in themselves ; correct the blood
With thrifty bits and labour ; let the flood,
Or the next neighbouring spring, give remedy
To greedy thirst and travail, not the tree
That hangs with wanton clusters : let not wine,
Unless in sacrifice or rites divine,
Be ever known of shepherds ; have a care,
Thou man of holy life ! Now do not spare
Their faults through much remissness, nor forget
To cherish him whose many pains and sweat
Hath given increase and added to the downs ;
Sort all your shepherds from the lazy clowns
That feed their heifers in the budded brooms ;
Teach the young maidens strictness, that the grooms
May ever fear to tempt their blowing youth ;
Banish all compliment, but single truth,
From every tongue and every shepherd's heart ;
Let them still use persuading, but no art.
Thus holy priest, I wish to thee and these
All the best goods and comforts that may please.

All. And all those blessings Heaven did ever give,
We pray upon this bower may ever live.

Priest. Kneel, every shepherd, while with powerful hand
I bless your after-labours, and the land
You feed your flocks upon. Great Pan defend you
From misfortune, and amend you ;
Keep you from those dangers still
That are followed by your will ;
Give ye means to know at length,
All your riches, all your strength,
Cannot keep your foot from falling
To lewd lust, that still is calling
At your cottage, till his power
Bring again that golden hour
Of peace and rest to every soul ;
May his care of you controul
All diseases, sores, or pain,
That in after-time may reign
Either in your flocks or you ;
Give ye all affections new,
New desires, and tempers new,
That he may be ever true !

Now rise, and go ; and, as ye pass away,
Sing to the God of Sheep that happy lay
That honest Dorus taught ye, — Dorus, he
That was the soul and god of melody.

[They sing and strew the ground with flowers.]

All ye woods, and trees, and bowers,
All ye virtues and ye powers
That inhabit in the lakes,
In the pleasant springs or brakes,
Move your feet
To our sound,
Whilst we greet
All this ground
With his honour and his name
That defends our flocks from blame.

He is great, and he is just,
He is ever good, and must
Thus be honoured. Daffadillies,
Roses, pinks, and lovèd lilies,
Let us fling,
Whilst we sing,
Ever holy,
Ever holy,
Ever honoured, ever young !
Thus great Pan is ever sung !

[Exeunt all except CLORIN and SATYR.]

Sat. Thou divinest, fairest, brightest,
Thou most powerful maid and whitest,
Thou most virtuous and most blessèd,
Eyes of stars, and golden-tressèd
Like Apollo ; tell me, sweetest,
What new service now is meetest
For the Satyr ? Shall I stray
In the middle air, and stay
The sailing rack, or nimbly take
Hold by the moon, and gently make
Suit to the pale queen of night
For a beam to give thee light ?
Shall I dive into the sea,
And bring thee coral, making way
Through the rising waves that fall
In snowy fleeces ? Dearest, shall

I catch thee wanton fawns, or flies
Whose woven wings the summer dyes
Of many colours? get thee fruit,
Or steal from Heaven and Orpheus' lute?
All these I'll venture for, and more,
To do her service all these woods adore.

Clo. No other service, Satyr, but thy watch
About these thicks,¹ lest harmless people catch
Mischief or sad mischance.

Sat. Holy virgin, I will dance
Round about these woods as quick
As the breaking light, and prick²
Down the lawns and down the vales
Faster than the windmill-sails.
So I take my leave, and pray
All the comforts of the day,
Such as Phoebus' heat doth send
On the earth, may still befriend
Thee and this arbour!

Clo. And to thee
All thy master's love be free!

[*Exeunt.*

¹ Thickets.

² Speed.





RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

From a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

BY

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN was born in Dublin, Ireland, September 30, 1751. His father was a teacher of elocution. His mother was the author of a novel and one or two plays. The boy was educated at Harrow, and with a schoolmate wrote a farce entitled "Jupiter." When he was twenty years of age the family removed to Bath, England; and he there made the acquaintance of the elder Linley, the composer, with whose daughter Elizabeth—a beauty and a singer, popularly called the Maid of Bath—he fell in love. They ran away to France and were married, and he fought two duels on her account. He entered himself as a law student, but his real bent was for literature, and in 1775 his comedy of "The Rivals" was brought out. It was a failure at first, but after some changes in the cast it was successful, and it has held its place to this day. Later in that year two other pieces of his were put upon the stage—"St. Patrick's Day" and "The Duenna," the latter having a run of sixty-three nights. The next year Sheridan, with his father-in-law and a friend, bought half of the patent of Drury Lane Theatre from Garrick, and a few years later the remainder. As a manager he was not very careful or business-like. But what the theatre had lost through his loose methods it regained when he produced "The School for Scandal," May 8, 1777. This form of title had been a favorite; the "Biographia Dramatica" enumerates more than twenty plays in which it was used, including "School for Authors," "School for Diffidence," "School for Eloquence," "School for Ingratitude," and "School for Prejudice." Some of these preceded Sheridan's, but Molière had used the form more than a century earlier. "The School for Scandal" was a brilliant success from the start, and it is still a favorite on the stage. Sheridan produced "The Critic" in 1779, and in 1799 adapted Kotzebue's tragedy of "Pizarro." After his career in dramatic art he turned to politics. He was elected to Parliament in 1780, and was Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1782, and Secretary to the Treasury a year later. He took an important part with the prosecution on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and in that and other debates exhibited wonderful powers of oratory. He held one or two offices afterward, but was defeated for reelection in 1812; and this and the burning of his theatre ruined his fortunes. He died July 7, 1816, in extreme poverty. His friends gave him a fine funeral and laid him in Westminster Abbey, and Byron closed a monody with the striking figure:

"Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die in moulding Sheridan."

A PORTRAIT

ADDRESSED TO MRS. CREWE, WITH THE COMEDY OF THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

BY R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.

TELL me, ye prim adepts in Scandal's school,
Who rail by precept, and detract by rule,
Lives there no character, so tried, so known,
So deck'd with grace, and so unlike your own,
That even you assist her fame to raise,
Approve by envy, and by silence praise!
Attend! — a model shall attract your view —
Daughters of calumny, I summon you!
You shall decide if this a portrait prove,
Or fond creation of the Muse and Love.
Attend, ye virgin critics, shrewd and sage,
Ye matron censors of this childish age,
Whose peering eye and wrinkled front declare
A fix'd antipathy to young and fair;
By cunning, cautious; or by nature, cold,
In maiden madness, virulently bold! —
Attend, ye skill'd to coin the precious tale,
Creating proof, where inuendos fail!
Whose practised memories, cruelly exact,
Omit no circumstance, except the fact! —
Attend, all ye who boast, — or old or young, —
The living libel of a slanderous tongue!
So shall my theme as far contrasted be,
As saints by fends, or hymns by calumny.
Come, gentle Amoret (for 'neath that name
In worthier verse is sung thy beauty's fame);
Come — for but thee who seeks the Muse? and while
Celestial blushes check thy conscious smile,
With timid grace, and hesitating eye,
The perfect model, which I boast, supply: —
Vain Muse! couldst thou the humblest sketch create
Of her, or slightest charm couldst imitate —
Could thy blest strain in kindred colours trace
The faintest wonder of her form and face —
Poets would study the immortal line,
And Reynolds own his art subdued by thine;
That art, which well might added lustre give
To Nature's best, and Heaven's superlative:
On Granby's cheek might bid new glories rise,
Or point a purer beam from Devon's eyes!
Hard is the task to shape that beauty's praise,
Whose judgment scorns the homage flattery pays!
But praising Amoret we cannot err,
No tongue o'ervalues Heaven, or flatters her,
Yet she by fate's perverseness — she alone
Would doubt our truth, nor deem such praise her own.

Adorning fashion, unadorn'd by dress,
 Simple from taste, and not from carelessness;
 Discreet in gesture, in deportment mild,
 Not stiff with prudence, nor uncouthly wild:
 No state has Amoret; no studied mien;
 She frowns no goddess, and she moves no queen.
 The softer charm that in her manner lies
 Is framed to captivate, yet not surprise;
 It justly suits the expression of her face, —
 'Tis less than dignity, and more than grace!
 On her pure cheek the native hue is such,
 That, form'd by Heaven to be admired so much,
 The hand divine, with a less partial care,
 Might well have fix'd a fainter crimson there,
 And bade the gentle inmate of her breast —
 Inshrined Modesty — supply the rest.
 But who the peril of her lips shall paint?
 Strip them of smiles — still, still all words are faint,
 But moving Love himself appears to teach
 Their action, though denied to rule her speech;
 And thou who seest her speak, and dost not hear,
 Mourn not her distant accents 'scape thine ear;
 Viewing those lips, thou still may'st make pretence
 To judge of what she says, and swear 'tis sense:
 Clothed with such grace, with such expression fraught,
 They move in meaning, and they pause in thought!
 But dost thou farther watch, with charm'd surprise,
 The mild irresolution of her eyes,
 Curious to mark how frequent they repose,
 In brief eclipse and momentary close —
 Ah! seest thou not an ambush'd Cupid there,
 Too tim'rous of his charge, with jealous care
 Veils and unveils those beams of heavenly light,
 Too full, too fatal else, for mortal sight?
 Nor yet, such pleasing vengeance fond to meet,
 In pard'ning dimples hope a safe retreat.
 What though her peaceful breast should ne'er allow
 Subduing frowns to arm her alter'd brow,
 By Love, I swear, and by his gentle wiles,
 More fatal still the mercy of her smiles!
 Thus lovely, thus adorn'd, possessing all
 Of bright or fair that can to woman fall,
 The height of vanity might well be thought
 Prerogative in her, and Nature's fault.
 Yet gentle Amoret, in mind supreme
 As well as charms, rejects the vainer theme;
 And, half mistrustful of her beauty's store,
 She bars with wit those darts too keen before: —
 Read in all knowledge that her sex should reach,
 Though Greville, or the Muse, should deign to teach,
 Fond to improve, nor timorous to discern
 How far it is a woman's grace to learn;
 In Millar's dialect she would not prove
 Apollo's priestess, but Apollo's love,
 Graced by those signs which truth delights to own,
 The timid blush, and mild submitted tone:

What'er she says, though sense appear throughout,
Displays the tender hue of female doubt;
Deck'd with that charm, how lovely wit appears,
How graceful science, when that robe she wears !
Such too her talents, and her bent of mind,
As speak a sprightly heart by thought refined :
A taste for mirth, by contemplation school'd,
A turn for ridicule, by candour ruled,
A scorn of folly, which she tries to hide;
An awe of talent, which she owns with pride !
Peace, idle Muse ! no more thy strain prolong,
But yield a theme, thy warmest praises wrong;
Just to her merit, though thou canst not raise
Thy feeble verse, behold th' acknowledged praise
Has spread conviction through the envious train,
And cast a fatal gloom o'er Scandal's reign !
And lo ! each pallid hag, with blister'd tongue,
Mutters assent to all thy zeal has sung —
Owns all the colours just — the outline true,
Thee my inspirer, and my model — CREWE !

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY DAVID GARRICK

A SCHOOL for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now, the knowing think;
We might as well be taught to eat and drink.
Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapours
Distress our fair ones — let them read the papers;
Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit;
Crave what you will — there's *quantum sufficit*.
"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just risen at noon, all night at cards when threshing
Strong tea and scandal — "Bless me, how refreshing!
Give me the papers, *Lisp* — how bold and free! [*Sigs.*]
'Last night Lord L. [*Sigs*] was caught with Lady D.'
For aching heads what charming sal volatile! [*Sigs.*]
'If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,
We hope she'll *draw* or we'll *undraw* the curtain.'
Fine satire, poz — in public all abuse it,
But, by ourselves [*Sigs*], our praise we can't refuse it,
Now, *Lisp*, read you — there, at that dash and star."
"Yes, ma'am — 'A certain lord had best beware,
Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;
For should he Lady W. find willing,
Wormwood is bitter" — "Oh! that's me! the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door."
Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:
Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestow'd,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road;
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks this hydra, Scandal, in his den.
For your applause all perils he would through —
He'll fight — that's write — a cavalliero true,
Till every drop of blood — that's ink — is spilt for you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR PETER TEAZLE.
SIR OLIVER SURFACE.
SIR HARRY BUMPER.
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.
JOSEPH SURFACE.
CHARLES SURFACE.
CARELESS.
SNAKE.
CRABTREE.
ROWLEY.
MOSES.
TRIP.
LADY TEAZLE.
LADY SNEERWELL.
MRS. CANDOUR.
MARIA.
Gentlemen, Maid, and Servants.

SCENE — LONDON



THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

ACT I

SCENE I. — LADY SNEERWELL'S DRESSING-ROOM

LADY SNEERWELL *discovered at her toilet; SNAKE drinking chocolate*

LADY SNEER. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

Snake. They were, madam; and, as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

Lady Sneer. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

Lady Sneer. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, and as many close confinements; nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *Mé-d-Mé* in the "Town and Country Magazine," when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

Lady Sneer. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

Snake. 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

Lady Sneer. You are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the least; every body allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or look than many can with the most

laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

Lady Sneer. Yes, my dear Snake ; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

Snake. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

Lady Sneer. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

Snake. I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death ; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of — the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character ; the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite ; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface ; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

Lady Sneer. Then, at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

Snake. No !

Lady Sneer. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune ; but, finding his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

Snake. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

Lady Sneer. Heavens ! how dull you are ! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, concealed even from you ? Must I confess that Charles — that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation — that he it is for whom I am thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice everything ?

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent: but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

Lady Sneer. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes; yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England; and, above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

Lady Sneer. True; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house—though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Surface.

Lady Sneer. Show him up. [*Exit SERVANT.*] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

Lady Sneer. Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment, but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us; and, believe me, the confidence is not ill placed.

Jos. Surf. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

Lady Sneer. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or what is more material to me, your brother.

Jos. Surf. I have not seen either since I left you: but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

Lady Sneer. Ah, my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

Jos. Surf. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

Lady Sneer. Poor Charles !

Jos. Surf. True, madam ; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles ! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him ; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves ——

Lady Sneer. O Lud ! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

Jos. Surf. Egad, that's true ! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming : I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface your most obedient.

Jos. Surf. Sir, your very devoted. — [*Exit SNAKE.*] Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

Lady Sneer. Why so ?

Jos. Surf. I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

Lady Sneer. And do you think he would betray us ?

Jos. Surf. Nothing more likely : take my word for 't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villainy. Ah, Maria !

Enter MARIA.

Lady Sneer. Maria, my dear, how do you do ? What's the matter ?

Mar. Oh ! there's that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's with his odious uncle, Crabtree ; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

Lady Sneer. Is that all ?

Jos. Surf. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

Lady Sneer. Nay, now you are severe ; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were^a here. But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so ?

Mar. Oh, he has done nothing — but 't is for what he has said : his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

Jos. Surf. Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend: and his uncle's as bad.

Lady Sneer. Nay, but we should make allowance; Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

Mar. For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface?

Jos. Surf. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

Lady Sneer. Psha! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature: the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

Jos. Surf. To be sure, madam; that conversation, where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

Mar. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalry, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and, if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

Lady Sneer. Beg her to walk in. — [*Exit SERVANT.*] Now, Maria, here is a character to your taste; for, though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody allows her to be the best natured and best sort of woman.

Mar. Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Jos. Surf. I' faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell: whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

Lady Sneer. Hush! — here she is!

Enter MRS. CANDOUR.

Mrs. Can. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century? — Mr. Surface, what news do you hear? — though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

Jos. Surf. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Oh, Maria! child, — what, is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume — the town talks of nothing else.

Mar. I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. Can. True, true, child: but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

Mar. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. Can. Very true, child: but what's to be done? People will talk — there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt. But Lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

Mar. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. Can. So they are, child — shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York Mail with her dancing-master.

Mar. I'll answer for't there are no grounds for that report.

Mrs. Can. Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear: no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino — though to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

Jos. Surf. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

Mar. 'Tis so; but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. Can. To be sure they are: tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers — 't is an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame;

and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But, Lord, do you think I would report these things! No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

Jos. Surf. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and nature!

Mrs. Can. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. By-the-by, I hope 't is not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

Jos. Surf. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Ah! I heard so — but you must tell him to keep up his spirits; everybody almost is in the same way: Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit — all up, I hear, within this week; so, if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

Jos. Surf. Doubtless, ma'am — a very great one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. [Exit.

Lady Sneer. So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you: positively you sha'n't escape.

Enter CRABTREE and SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too. Isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

Sir Ben. Oh, fie, uncle!

Crab. Nay, egad it's true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymers in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire? — Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowsie's conversazione. Come now; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and ——

Sir Ben. Uncle, now — pr'ythee ——

Crab. I' faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these sort of things.

Lady Sneer. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir Ben. To say truth, ma'am, 't is very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public.

[*Pointing to MARIA.*

Crab. [*To MARIA.*] 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you! — you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir Ben. [*To MARIA.*] Yes, ma'am, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin. 'Fore Gad they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

Crab. But, ladies, that's true — have you heard the news?

Mrs. Can. What, sir, do you mean the report of —

Crab. No, ma'am that's not it. — Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. Can. Impossible.

Crab. Ask Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. 'T is very true, ma'am: everything is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoken.

Crab. Yes — and they do say there were pressing reasons for it.

Lady Sneer. Why, I have heard something of this before.

Mrs. Can. It can't be — and I wonder any one should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

Sir Ben. O Lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 't was believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Mrs. Can. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robust characters of a hundred prudes.

Sir Ben. True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

Mrs. Can. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir

Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

Crab. That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge? — Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

Sir. Ben. Oh, to be sure! — the most whimsical circumstance.

Lady Sneer. How was it, pray?

Crab. Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it; for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins. "What!" cries the Lady Dowager Dundizy (who you know is as deaf as a post), "has Miss Piper had twins?" This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 't was the next morning everywhere reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl: and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

Lady Sneer. Strange indeed!

Crab. Matter of fact, I assure you. O Lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

Jos. Surf. Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

Crab. He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe? Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

Jos. Surf. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

Sir Ben. To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

Crab. That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman: no man more popular there, 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine; and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

Sir Ben. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the ante-chamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Jos. Surf. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Mar. [*Aside.*] Their malice is intolerable! — [*Aloud.*] Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning; I'm not very well.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. Can. Oh dear! she changes colour very much.

Lady Sneer. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her: she may want your assistance.

Mrs. Can. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am. — Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be? [*Exit.*]

Lady Sneer. 'T was nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

Sir Ben. The young lady's *penchant* is obvious.

Crab. But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that: follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

Sir Ben. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on 't your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. O Lud, ay! undone as ever man was — can't raise a guinea.

Sir Ben. And everything sold, I'm told, that was movable.

Crab. I have seen one that was at his house. Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots.

Sir Ben. And I'm very sorry also to hear some bad stories against him.

[*Going.*]

Crab. Oh, he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir Ben. But, however, as he's your brother — [*Going.*]

Crab. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

Exeunt CRABTREE and SIR BENJAMIN.

Lady Sneer. Ha! ha! 't is very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Jos. Surf. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

Lady Sneer. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we

imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN SIR PETER TEAZLE'S HOUSE.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since. We tift a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town with as ready a grace as if she never had seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Oh! Sir Peter, your servant; how is it with you, sir?

Sir Pet. Very bad, Master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

Row. What can have happened since yesterday?

Sir Pet. A good question to a married man!

Row. Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady can't be the cause of your uneasiness.

Sir Pet. Why, has anybody told you she was dead?

Row. Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

Sir Pet. But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest-tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

Row. Indeed!

Sir Pet. Ay; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong. But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

Row. You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on 't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

Sir Pet. You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence: of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but, for the other, take my word for 't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

Row. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

Sir Pet. What! let me hear.

Row. Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

Sir Pet. How; you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

Row. I did not; but his passage has been remarkably quick.

Sir Pet. Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together; but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

Row. Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

Sir Pet. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits — however he shall have his way: but, pray, does he know I am married?

Row. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

Sir Pet. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption! Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together, but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be soon at my house, though — I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

Row. By no means.

Sir Pet. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'll have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

Row. I understand you; but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

Sir Pet. Egad, and so we must — and that's impossible. Ah! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves: no — the crime carries its punishment along with it.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN SIR PETER TEAZLE'S HOUSE

Enter SIR PETER and LADY TEAZLE.

SIR PET. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

Lady Teaz. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in everything, and what's more, I will too. What! though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

Sir Pet. Very well, ma'am, very well; so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

Lady Teaz. Authority! No, to be sure. If you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

Sir Pet. Old enough! — ay, there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance!

Lady Teas. My extravagance ! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife ! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a greenhouse, and give a *fête champêtre* at Christmas.

Lady Teas. And am I to blame, Sir Peter, because flowers are dear in cold weather ? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet.

Sir Pet. Oons ! madam — if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus ; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

Lady Teas. No, no, I don't ; 't was a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style — the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side, your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

Lady Teas. Oh, yes ! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led. My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lapdog.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, ma'am, 't was so indeed.

Lady Teas. And then you know my evening amusements ! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up ; to play Pope Joan with the curate ; to read a sermon to my aunt ; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

Sir Pet. I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from ; but now you must have your coach — *vis-à-vis* — and three powdered footmen before your chair ; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse.

Lady Teas. No — I swear I never did that : I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

Sir Pet. This, madam, was your situation ; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank — in short, I have made you my wife.

Lady Teas. Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, that is ——

Sir Pet. My widow, I suppose?

Lady Teas. Hem! hem!

Sir Pet. I thank you, madam — but don't flatter yourself ; for, though your ill conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you : however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

Lady Teas. Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

Sir Pet. 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady Teas. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion?

Sir Pet. The fashion, indeed! what had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

Lady Teas. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

Sir Pet. Ay — there again — taste! Zounds! madam, you had no taste when you married me!

Lady Teas. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter! and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's.

Sir Pet. Ay, there's another precious circumstance — a charming set of acquaintance you have made there!

Lady Teas. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

Sir Pet. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance ; for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

Lady Teas. What, would you restrain the freedom of speech?

Sir Pet. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

Lady Teas. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

Sir Pet. Grace indeed !

Lady Teas. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse ; when I say an ill-natured thing, 't is out of pure good humour ; and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

Sir Pet. Well, well, I'll call in, just to look after my own character.

Lady Teas. Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So good-bye to ye. [Exit

Sir Pet. So — I have gained much by my intended expostulation ! Yet with what a charming air she contradicts everything I say, and how pleasantly she shows her contempt for my authority ! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarreling with her ; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [Exit

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN LADY SNEERWELL'S HOUSE

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN
BACKBITE, and JOSEPH SURFACE, *discovered.*

Lady Sneer. Nay, positively, we will hear it.

Jos. Surf. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

Sir Ben. Oh, plague on 't, uncle ! 't is mere nonsense.

Crab. No, no ; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore !

Sir Ben. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know that, one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricule was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies : upon which, I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following : —

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies ;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies :
To give them this title I'm sure can't be wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horse-back too.

Jos. Surf. A very Phœbus, mounted — indeed, Sir Benjamin !

Sir Ben. Oh dear, sir ! trifles — trifles.

Enter LADY TEAZLE and MARIA.

Mrs. Can. I must have a copy.

Lady Sneer. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

Lady Teaz. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

Lady Sneer. Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

Mar. I take very little pleasure in cards — however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

Lady Teaz. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her ; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. Now, I'll die ; but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

Lady Teaz. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. Can. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermilion to be handsome.

Lady Sneer. Oh, surely she is a pretty woman.

Crab. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. She has a charming fresh colour.

Lady Teaz. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. Can. Oh, fie ! I'll swear her colour is natural : I have seen it come and go !

Lady Teaz. I dare swear you have, ma'am : it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

Sir Ben. True, ma'am, it not only comes and goes ; but, what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it !

Mrs. Can. Ha ! ha ! ha ! how I hate to hear you talk so ! But surely, now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

Crab. Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O Lord ! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour !

Mrs. Can. Now positively you wrong her ; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost — and I don't think she looks more.

Sir Ben. Ah ! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

Lady Sneer. Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity ; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

Sir Ben. Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the

widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill — but, when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which a connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique.

Crab. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well said, nephew !

Mrs. Can. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, you make me laugh ; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper ?

Sir Ben. Why, she has very pretty teeth.

Lady Teas. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on ajar, as it were — thus.

[*Shows her teeth.*]

Mrs. Can. How can you be so ill-natured ?

Lady Teas. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's-box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise as it were — thus : "How do you do, madam ? Yes, madam." [*Mimics.*]

Lady Sneer. Very well, Lady Teazle ; I see you can be a little severe.

Lady Teas. In defence of a friend, it is but justice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ladies, your most obedient. — [*Aside.*] Mercy on me. here is the whole set ! a character dead at every word, I suppose.

Mrs. Can. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious — and Lady Teazle as bad as any one.

Sir Pet. That must be very distressing to you, indeed, Mrs. Candour.

Mrs. Can. Oh, they will allow good qualities to nobody : not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Popsy.

Lady Teas. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night ?

Mrs. Can. Nay, her bulk is her misfortune ; and, when she takes so much pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

Lady Sneer. That's very true, indeed.

Lady Teas. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey ; laces herself by pulleys ; and often, in the hottest noon in summer,

you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's, and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

Mrs. Can. I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

Sir Pet. Yes, a good defence, truly.

Mrs. Can. Truly, Lady Teazle is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

Crab. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious — an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

Mrs. Can. Positively you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and, as for her person, great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl of six-and-thirty.

Lady Sneer. Though, surely, she is handsome still — and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candle-light, it is not to be wondered at.

Mrs. Can. True, and then as to her manner: upon my word I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education; for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

Sir Ben. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

Sir Pet. Yes, damned good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me! [Aside.

Mrs. Can. For my part, I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill spoken of.

Sir Pet. No, to be sure!

Sir Ben. Oh! you are of a moral turn. Mrs. Candour and I can sit for an hour and hear Lady Stucco talk sentiment.

Lady Teaz. Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner; for she's just like the French fruit one cracks for mottoes — made up of paint and proverb.

Mrs. Can. Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend; and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle, and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

Crab. Oh, to be sure! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 't is a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

Sir Ben. So she has, indeed — an Irish front —

Crab. Caledonian locks —

Sir Ben. Dutch nose —

Crab. Austrian lips —

Sir Ben. Complexion of a Spaniard ——

Crab. And teeth *à la Chinoise* ——

Sir Ben. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa — where no two guests are of a nation ——

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war — wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Mrs. Can. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Sir Pet. Mercy on my life ! — a person they dine with twice a week !

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so — for give me leave to say that Mrs. Ogle ——

Sir Pet. Madam, madam, I beg your pardon — there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

Lady Sneer. Ha ! ha ! ha ! well said, Sir Peter ! but you are a cruel creature — too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

Sir Pet. Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady Teas. True, Sir Peter ; I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

Sir Ben. Or rather, suppose them man and wife, because one seldom sees them together.

Lady Teas. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir Pet. 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

Lady Sneer. O Lud ! Sir Peter ; would you deprive us of our privileges ?

Sir Pet. Ay, madam ; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

Lady Sneer. Go, you monster !

Mrs. Can. But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear ?

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, I would have law merchant for them too; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

Crab. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

Lady Sneer. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

Enter SERVANT, who whispers SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. I'll be with them directly. — [*Exit SERVANT.*] I'll get away unperceived. [*Aside.*]

Lady Sneer. Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?

Sir Pet. Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit.*]

Sir Ben. Well — certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being: I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he were not your husband.

Lady Teas. Oh, pray don't mind that; come, do let's hear them.

[*Exeunt all but JOSEPH SURFACE and MARIA.*]

Jos. Surf. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

Mar. How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dullness!

Jos. Surf. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are; they have no malice at heart.

Mar. Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

Jos. Surf. Undoubtedly, madam; and it has always been a sentiment of mine, that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

Mar. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

Jos. Surf. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

Mar. Ungenerously urged ! But, whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

Jos. Surf. Nay, but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown : by all that's honest, I swear — [*Kneels.*]

Re-enter LADY TEAZLE behind.

Aside.] Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle. — [*Aloud to MARIA.*] You must not — no, you shall not — for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle —

Mar. Lady Teazle !

Jos. Surf. Yet were Sir Peter to suspect —

Lady Teas. [*Coming forward.*] What is this, pray ? Does he take her for me ? — Child, you are wanted in the next room. — [*Exit. MARIA.*] What is all this, pray ?

Jos. Surf. Oh, the most unlucky circumstance in nature ! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

Lady Teas. Indeed ! but you seemed to adopt a very tender mode of reasoning — do you usually argue on your knees ?

Jos. Surf. Oh, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast — But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised ?

Lady Teas. No, no : I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Jos. Surf. True — a mere Platonic cicisbeo, what every wife is entitled to.

Lady Teas. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to —

Jos. Surf. The only revenge in your power. Well, I applaud your moderation.

Lady Teas. Go — you are an insinuating wretch ! But we shall be missed — let us join the company.

Jos. Surf. But we had best not return together.

Lady Teas. Well, don't stay : for Maria sha'n't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit.*]

Jos. Surf. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into ! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria ; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [Exit.

SCENE III.—A ROOM IN SIR PETER TEAZLE'S HOUSE

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Ha ! ha ! ha ! so my old friend is married, hey ?—a young wife out of the country. Ha ! ha ! ha ! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last !

Row. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver ; 't is a tender point, I assure, though he has been married only seven months.

Sir Oliv. Then he has been just a half year on the stool of repentance !—Poor Peter ! But you say he has entirely given up Charles — never sees him, hey ?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has industriously been led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

Sir Oliv. Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you ! No, no ; if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row. Then, my life on 't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new life to find that your heart is not turned against him, and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

Sir Oliv. What ! shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself ? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths ; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was ?

Row. Sir, 't is this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family. But here comes Sir Peter.

Sir Oliv. Egad, so he does ! Mercy on me ! he's greatly altered, and seems to have a settled married look ! One may read husband in his face at this distance !

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ha ! Sir Oliver — my old friend ! Welcome to England a thousand times !

Sir Oliv. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter ! and i' faith I am glad to find you well, believe me !

Sir Pet. Oh ! 't is a long time since we met — fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

Sir Oliv. Ay, I have had my share. But, what ! I find you are married, hey, my old boy ? Well, well, it can't be helped ; and so — I wish you joy with all my heart !

Sir Pet. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver. — Yes, I have entered into — the happy state ; but we'll not talk of that now.

Sir Oliv. True, true, Sir Peter ; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting. No, no, no.

Row. [*Aside to SIR OLIVER.*] Take care, pray, sir.

Sir Oliv. Well, so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, hey ?

Sir Pet. Wild ! Ah ! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there ; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends ; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be — everybody in the world speaks well of him.

Sir Oliv. I am sorry to hear it ; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him ! Psha ! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir Pet. What, Sir Oliver ! do you blame him for not making enemies ?

Sir Oliv. Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

Sir Pet. Well, well — you'll be convinced when you know him. 'T is edification to hear him converse ; he professes the noblest sentiments.

Sir Oliv. Oh, plague of his sentiments ! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly. But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter ; I don't mean to defend Charles's

errors : but, before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts ; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

Sir Pet. Oh, my life on Joseph's honour !

Sir Oliv. Well — come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.

Sir Pet. Allons, then !

Sir Oliv. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life ! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little : for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth ; 't is like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN SIR PETER TEAZLE'S HOUSE

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, and ROWLEY.

SIR PET. Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley ? I don't see the jet of your scheme.

Row. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles : from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do ; and he is, at this time, endeavoring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

Sir Oliv. Ah ! he is my brother's son.

Sir Pet. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to —

Row. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends ; and, as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions : and believe me, sir, you will

find in the youngest brother, one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it, —

“ . . . a heart to pity, and a hand,
Open as day, for melting charity.”

Sir Pet. Psha ! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give ? Well, well, make the trial if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs ?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence — This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

• *Sir Pet.* Pray let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk up stairs. [Calls to Servant.

Sir Pet. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth ?

Row. Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived ; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

Sir Pet. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter MOSES.

— This is Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

Mos. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him : but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir Oliv. That was unlucky, truly ; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

Mos. None at all ; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

Sir Oliv. Unfortunate, indeed ! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses ?

Mos. Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought

him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

Sir Pet. What, one Charles has never had money from before?

Mos. Yes, Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

Sir Pet. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me! — Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

Mos. Not at all.

Sir Pet. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation: go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

Sir Oliv. Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Sir Pet. True, so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure. However, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

Mos. You may depend upon me. — [*Looks at his watch.*] This is near the time I was to have gone.

Sir Oliv. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses — But hold! I have forgot one thing — how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Mos. There's no need — the principal is Christian.

Sir Oliv. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But, then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a moneylender?

Sir Pet. Not at all; 't would not be out of character if you went in your own carriage — would it, Moses?

Mos. Not in the least.

Sir Oliv. Well, but how must I talk? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

Sir Pet. Oh, there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands. Hey, Moses?

Mos. Yes, that's a very great point.

Sir Oliv. I'll answer for 't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent on the loan, at least.

Mos. If you ask him no more than that you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what, the plague! how much then?

Mos. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not

very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent ; but if you find him in great distress, and want the moneys very bad, you may ask double.

Sir Pet. A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. Truly, I think so — and not unprofitable.

Mos. Then, you know, you haven't the moneys yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

Sir Oliv. Oh ! I borrow it of a friend, do I ?

Mos. And your friend is an unconscionable dog, but you can't help that.

Sir Oliv. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he ?

Mos. Yes, and he himself has not the moneys by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

Sir Oliv. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he ? Well, that's very kind of him.

Sir Pet. I' faith, Sir Oliver — Mr. Premium, I mean — you'll soon be master of the trade. But, Moses ! would not you have him run out a little against the annuity bill ? That would be in character, I should think.

Mos. Very much.

Row. And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself ?

Mos. Ay, great pity !

Sir. Pet. And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious gripe of usury, and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

Sir Oliv. So, so — Moses shall give me farther instructions as we go together.

Sir Pet. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

Sir Oliv. Oh, never fear ! my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner. [*Exit with MOSSES.*]

Sir Pet. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced : you are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her. — [*Exit*

ROWLEY.] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph — I am determined I will do it — he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

Mar. No, sir; he was engaged.

Sir Pet. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

Mar. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely — you compel me to declare that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

Sir Pet. So — here's perverseness! No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

Mar. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him; I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

Sir Pet. Well, well, pity him as much as you please; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Mar. Never to his brother!

Sir Pet. Go, perverse and obstinate! But take care, madam: you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is; don't compel me to inform you of it.

Mar. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable. *[Exit.]*

Sir Pet. Was ever man so crossed as I am, everything conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter. — *[Lady Teazle sings without.]* But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady Teaz. Lud ! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill-humoured when I am not by.

Sir Pet. Ah, Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humoured at all times.

Lady Teaz. I am sure I wish I had ; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

Sir Pet. Two hundred pounds ! what, an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it? But speak to me thus, an i' faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it ; but seal me a bond for the repayment.

Lady Teaz. Oh, no — there — my note of hand will do as well.
[Offering her hand.]

Sir Pet. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you : but shall we always live thus, hey?

Lady Teaz. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

Sir Pet. Well — then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

Lady Teaz. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would : and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow who would deny me nothing — didn't you?

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive —

Lady Teaz. Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

Sir Pet. Indeed !

Lady Teaz. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

Sir Pet. Thank you.

Lady Teaz. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

Sir Pet. And you prophesied right: and we shall now be the happiest couple —

Lady Teaz. And never differ again?

Sir Pet. No, never! — though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first.

Lady Teaz. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

Sir Pet. Now see, my angel! take care — contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

Lady Teaz. Then don't you begin it, my love!

Sir Pet. There now! you — you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

Lady Teaz. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear —

Sir Pet. There! now you want to quarrel again.

Lady Teaz. No, I'm sure I don't; but if you will be so peevish —

Sir Pet. There now, who begins first?

Lady Teaz. Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing — but there's no bearing your temper.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam: the fault's in your own temper.

Lady Teaz. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

Sir Pet. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gipsy.

Lady Teaz. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

Sir Pet. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

Lady Teaz. So much the better.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam: 't is evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you — a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest squires in the neighbourhood.

Lady Teaz. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you — an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

Sir Pet. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

Lady Teaz. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody

said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

Sir Pet. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, you and Charles are, not without grounds——

Lady Teas. Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

Sir Pet. Very well, madam! very well! A separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

Lady Teas. Agreed! agreed! And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple, and never differ again, you know: ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye! bye!

[*Exit.*]

Sir Pet. Plagues and tortures! can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper: no! she may break my heart, but she shan't keep her temper.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN CHARLES SURFACE'S HOUSE

Enter TRIP, MOSES, and SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Trip. Here, Master Moses! if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name?

Sir Oliv. Mr. Moses, what is my name? [*Aside to MOSES.*]

Mos. Mr. Premium.

Trip. Premium—very well.

[*Exit, taking snuff.*]

Sir Oliv. To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what!—sure, this was my brother's house?

Mos. Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, etc., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

Sir Oliv. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP.

Trip. My master says you must wait, gentlemen; he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

Sir Oliv. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message?

Trip. Yes, yes, sir; he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium: no, no, no.

Sir Oliv. Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name?

Trip. Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

Sir Oliv. Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

Trip. Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir Oliv. Bags and bouquets? halters and bastinadoes! [*Aside.*

Trip. And *à propos*, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

Sir Oliv. Wants to raise money too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns.

[*Aside.*

Mos. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

Trip. Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

Mos. No, 't wouldn't do.

Trip. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

Sir Oliv. An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! [*Aside.*

Mos. Well, but you must insure your place.

Trip. Oh, with all my heart! I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

Sir Oliv. It's more than I would your neck. [*Aside.*

Mos. But is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the

reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver; — these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security — hey, my little fellow?

Mos. Well, well.

[*Bell rings.*]

Trip. Egad, I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses. This way, gentlemen, I'll insure my place, you know.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

CHARLES SURFACE, SIR HARRY BUMPER, CARELESS, and Gentlemen,
discovered drinking.

Chas. Surf. 'Fore heaven, 'tis true! — there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink.

Care. It is so, indeed, Charles! they give in to all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably! for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa-water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

First Gent. But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

Care. True! there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

Chas. Surf. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of champagne and I never lose.

All. Hey, what?

Care. At least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

Second Gent. Ay, that I believe.

Chas. Surf. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

Care. Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

Chas. Surf. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible — on earth.

Care. Oh! then we'll find some canonised vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

Chas. Surf. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria! —

Sir Har. Maria who?

Chas. Surf. Oh, damn the surname! — 't is too formal to be registered in Love's calendar — Maria!

All. Maria!

Chas. Surf. But now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

Care. Nay, never study, Sir Harry: we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

Sir Har. Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady. [Sings.

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;

Here's to the widow of fifty;

Here's to the flaunting extravagant queen,

And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, —

Drink to the lass,

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;

Now to the maid who has none, sir;

Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,

And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow:

Now to her that's as brown as a berry:

Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,

And now to the damsel that's merry.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,

Young or ancient, I care not a feather;

So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,

So fill up your glasses nay, fill to the brim,

And let us e'en toast them together.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

All. Bravo! bravo!

Enter TRIP, and whispers CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little. — Careless, take the chair, will you?

Care. Nay, pr'ythee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropped in by chance?

Chas. Surf. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

Care. Oh, damn it! let's have the Jew in.

First Gent. Ay, and the broker too, by all means.

Second Gent. Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

Chas. Surf. Egad, with all my heart! — Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in. — [*Exit TRIP.*] Though there's one of them a stranger, I can tell you.

Care. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

Chas. Surf. Oh, hang 'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Re-enter TRIP, with SIR OLIVER SURFACE and MOSES.

Chas. Surf. So, honest Moses; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium — that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

Mos. Yes, sir.

Chas. Surf. Set chairs, Trip. — Sit down, Mr. Premium. — Glasses, Trip. — [*TRIP gives chairs and glasses and exit.*] Sit down, Moses. — Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment; here's "Success to usury!" — Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Mos. Success to usury!

[*Drinks.*]

Care. Right, Moses — usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

Sir Oliv. Then here's — All the success it deserves! [*Drinks.*]

Care. No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

First Gent. A pint bumper, at least.

Mos. Oh, pray, sir, consider — Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine.

Second Gent. Give Moses a quart glass — this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

Care. Here, now for't! I'll see justice done, to the last drop of my bottle.

Sir Oliv. Nay, pray, gentlemen — I did not expect this usage.

Chas. Surf. No, hang it, you shan't; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

Sir Oliv. Odd! I wish I was well out of their company. [*Aside.*]

Care. Plague on 'em then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room. — Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

Chas. Surf. I will! I will! — [*Exeunt SIR HARRY BUMPER and Gentlemen: CARELESS following.*] Careless!

Care. [*Returning.*] Well!

Chas. Surf. Perhaps I may want you.

Care. Oh, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 't is all the same to me. [*Exit.*]

Mos. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is —

Chas. Surf. Psha! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money; you I take to be a prudent old fellow who have got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without further ceremony.

Sir Oliv. Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

Chas. Surf. Oh, no, sir! plain dealing in business I always think best.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's an unconscionable dog. Isn't he Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you. Mustn't he Moses?

Mos. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie!

Chas. Surf. Right. People that speak truth generally do. But

these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

Sir Oliv. Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window!

Sir Oliv. Nor any stock, I presume?

Chas. Surf. Nothing but live stock — and that only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections?

Sir Oliv. Why, to say truth, I am.

Chas. Surf. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations?

Sir Oliv. That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Chas. Surf. Oh, no! — there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me every thing.

Sir Oliv. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, 't is just so. Moses knows 't is true; don't you, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes! I'll swear to 't.

Sir Oliv. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal.

[*Aside.*

Chas. Surf. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life; though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word I should be very sorry to hear that any thing had happened to him.

Sir Oliv. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me — for I might live to be a hundred and never see the principal.

Chas. Surf. Oh, yes, you would! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

Sir Oliv. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Chas. Surf. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

Sir Oliv. No, indeed I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

Chas. Surf. There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor Uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him.

Sir Oliv. No! ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him! Ha! ha! ha! egad—ha! ha! ha!

Chas. Surf. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. No, no, I'm not.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—you know that mends your chance.

Sir Oliv. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over; nay, some say he is actually arrived.

Chas. Surf. Psha! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on 't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes, certainly.

Sir Oliv. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority. Haven't I, Moses?

Mos. Yes, most undoubted!

Sir Oliv. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of.

Chas. Surf. How do you mean?

Sir Oliv. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

Chas. Surf. O Lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Good lack! all the family race-cups and corporation-bowls!—[*Aloud.*] Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom!—[*Aloud.*] Pray what are become of the books?

Chas. Surf. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

Mos. I know nothing of books.

Sir Oliv. So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not much, indeed ; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above : and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain !

Sir Oliv. Hey ! what the devil ! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you ?

Chas. Surf. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

Sir Oliv. What ! your great-uncles and aunts ?

Chas. Surf. Ay, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Now I give him up ! — [*Aloud.*] What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred ? Odd's life ! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood ?

Chas. Surf. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry : what need you care, if you have your money's worth ?

Sir Oliv. Well, I'll be the purchaser : I think I can dispose of the family canvas. — [*Aside.*] Oh, I'll never forgive him this ! never !

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what keeps you ?

Chas. Surf. I can't come yet. I' faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs ; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors !

Care. Oh, burn your ancestors !

Chas. Surf. No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you : egad, you shall be auctioneer — so come along with us.

Care. Oh, have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box ! Going ! going !

Sir Oliv. Oh, the profligates ! [*Aside.*]

Chas. Surf. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business ?

Sir Oliv. Oh, yes, I do, vastly ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction — ha ! ha ! — [*Aside.*] Oh, the prodigal !

Chas. Surf. To be sure ! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations ?

[*Exeunt.*]

Sir Oliv. I'll never forgive him ; never ! never !

ACT IV

SCENE I.—A PICTURE ROOM IN CHARLES SURFACE'S HOUSE

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, and CARELESS.

CHAS. SURF. Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

Sir Oliv. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting; no volantière grace or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir Oliv. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Chas. Surf. I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Care. Ay, ay, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Chas. Surf. Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here? Oh, our genealogy in full. [*Taking pedigree down.*] Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue! This shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir Oliv. What an unnatural rogue!—an ex post facto parricide!
[*Aside.*]

Care. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 't will not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

Chas. Surf. Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great-uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. What say you,

Mr. Premium? look at him — there's a hero! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside to Moses.*] Bid him speak.

Mos. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Chas. Surf. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds! — [*Aloud.*] Very well, sir, I take him at that.

Chas. Surf. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard. — Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten — the sheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself! [*Aloud.*] Five pounds ten — she's mine.

Chas. Surf. Knock down my aunt Deborah! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs. — You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

Chas. Surf. Well, take that couple for the same.

Mos. 'Tis a good bargain.

Chas. Surf. Careless! — This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit. — What do you rate him at, Moses?

Mos. Four guineas.

Chas. Surf. Four guineas! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig. — Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woollack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. By all means.

Care. Gone!

Chas. Surf. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of parliament, and noted speakers; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliv. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

Care. Well said, little Premium ! I'll knock them down at forty.

Chas. Surf. Here's a jolly fellow — I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich : take him at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. No, no ; six will do for the mayor.

Chas. Surf. Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. They're mine.

Chas. Surf. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't ! we shall be all day retailing in this manner ; do let us deal wholesale ; what say you little Premium ? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

Care. Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, any thing to accommodate you : they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee ?

Sir Oliv. Yes, sir, I mean that ; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Chas. Surf. What, that ? Oh ; that's my uncle Oliver ! 'twas done before he went to India.

Care. Your uncle Oliver ! Gad, then, you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw ; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance ! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium ?

Sir Oliv. Upon my soul, sir, I do not ; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber ?

Chas. Surf. No, hang it ! I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] The rogue's my nephew after all ! — [*Aloud.*] But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Chas. Surf. I'm sorry for 't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them ?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] I forgive him everything ! — [*Aloud.*] But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Chas. Surf. Don't tease me, master broker ; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] How like his father the dog is ! — [*Aloud.*]

Well, well, I have done. — [*Aside.*] I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance. — [*Aloud.*] Here is a draught for your sum.

Chas. Surf. Why, 't is for eight hundred pounds !

Sir Oliv. You will not let Sir Oliver go ?

Chas. Surf. Zounds ! no ! I tell you, once more.

Sir Oliv. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain ; you are an honest fellow, Charles — I beg your pardon, sir, for being so free. — Come, Moses.

Chas. Surf. Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow ! — But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen ?

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

Chas. Surf. But hold ; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for, I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliv. I will, I will — for all but Oliver ?

Chas. Surf. Ay, all but the little nabob.

Sir Oliv. You're fixed on that ?

Chas. Surf. Peremptorily.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] A dear extravagant rogue ! — [*Aloud.*] Good day ! — Come, Moses. — [*Aside.*] Let me hear now who dares call him profligate !

[*Exit with MOSES.*]

Care. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with !

Chas. Surf. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow. — Ha ! here's Rowley. — Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

Care. I will — but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense ; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

Chas. Surf. Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

Care. Nothing else.

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, never fear. — [*Exit CARELESS.*] So ! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of these five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore Heaven ! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for ! — Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.

[*Bows ceremoniously to the pictures.*]

Enter ROWLEY.

Ha ! old Rowley ! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

Chas. Surf. Why, there's the point ! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits ; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations ; to be sure, 't is very affecting : but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I ?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

Chas. Surf. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds ! Consider only ——

Chas. Surf. Gad's life, don't talk about it ! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and, if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

Row. Ah ! there's the point ! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb ——

Chas. Surf. "Be just before you're generous." — Why, so I would if I could ; but Justice is an old, hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection ——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, it's very true ; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give ; so, damn your economy ; and now for hazard. *[Exit.*

SCENE II.—ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and MOSES.

Mos. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory ; 't is great pity he's so extravagant.

Sir Oliv. True, but he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And loves wine and women so much.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And games so deep.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture. Oh, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase —

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

Row. And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase money — I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

Mos. Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so damned charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Row. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Oh, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out; this way — Moses, a word. *[Exit with MOSES.]*

Sir Oliv. There's a fellow for you! Would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master!

Row. Indeed!

Sir Oliv. Yes, they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare: but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. — A LIBRARY IN JOSEPH SURFACE'S HOUSE

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and Servant.

Jos. Surf. No letter from Lady Teazle?

Ser. No, sir.

Jos. Surf. *[Aside.]* I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. *[Knocking without.]*

Ser. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

Jos. Surf. Hold ! See whether it is or not, before you go to the door : I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

Ser. 'Tis her ladyship, sir ; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Jos. Surf. Stay, stay ; draw that screen before the window — that will do ; — my opposite neighbour is a maiden lady of so curious a temper. — [*Servant draws the screen, and exit.*] I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria ; but she must by no means be let into that secret, — at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady Teaz. What, sentiment in soliloquy now ? Have you been very impatient ? O Lud ! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

Jos. Surf. O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

[*Places chairs, and sits after LADY TEAZLE is seated.*]

Lady Teaz. Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter has grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too — that's the best of the story, isn't it ?

Jos. Surf. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up.

[*Aside.*]

Lady Teaz. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced ; don't you, Mr. Surface ?

Jos. Surf. [*Aside.*] Indeed I do not. — [*Aloud.*] Oh, certainly I do ! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady Teaz. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one ? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too ; that's what vexes me.

Jos. Surf. Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance — without foundation ; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed ; for, when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady Teaz. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice ; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend ; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed 't is monstrous !

Jos. Surf. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 't is your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

Lady Teaz. Indeed ! So that, if he suspects me without cause, it follows that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for 't ?

Jos. Surf. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you ; and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

Lady Teaz. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence——

Jos. Surf. Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake ! 't is this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it that makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion ? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences ? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions ? why, the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady Teaz. 'T is very true !

Jos. Surf. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling faux pas, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

Lady Teaz. Do you think so ?

Jos. Surf. Oh, I am sure on't ; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for—in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady Teaz. So, so ; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation ?

Jos. Surf. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady Teaz. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

Jos. Surf. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady Teaz. Why, if my understanding were once convinced ——

Jos. Surf. Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes — Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

Lady Teaz. Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument? [*Rises.*]

Jos. Surf. Ah, the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

Lady Teaz. I doubt they do indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill usage sooner than your honourable logic, after all.

Jos. Surf. Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of ——

[*Taking her hand.*]

Re-enter Servant.

'Sdeath, you blockhead — what do you want?

Ser. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Jos. Surf. Sir Peter! — Oons — the devil!

Lady Teaz. Sir Peter! O Lud! I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

Ser. Sir, 't wasn't I let him in.

Lady Teaz. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic — Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs — I'll get behind here — and if ever I'm so imprudent again ——

[*Goes behind the screen.*]

Jos. Surf. Give me that book.

[*Sits down. Servant pretends to adjust his chair.*]

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ay, ever improving himself — Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface ——

[*Pats JOSEPH on the shoulder.*]

Jos. Surf. Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon — [*Gaping, throws away the book.*] I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here,

I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir Pet. 'Tis very neat indeed. Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge — hung, I perceive, with maps.

Jos. Surf. Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

Sir Pet. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find any thing in a hurry.

Jos. Surf. Ay, or to hide anything in a hurry either. [Aside.

Sir Pet. Well, I have a little private business —

Jos. Surf. You need not stay. [To Servant.

Ser. No, sir.

[Exit.

Jos. Surf. Here's a chair, Sir Peter — I beg —

Sir Pet. Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you — a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Jos. Surf. Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

Sir Pet. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

Jos. Surf. Indeed! you astonish me!

Sir Pet. Yes! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

Jos. Surf. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

Sir Pet. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathize with me!

Jos. Surf. Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

Sir Pet. I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Jos. Surf. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite!

Sir Pet. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

Jos. Surf. My brother! impossible!

Sir Pet. Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

Jos. Surf. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

Sir Pet. True ; but your brother has no sentiment — you never hear him talk so.

Jos. Surf. Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir Pet. Ay ; but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow ?

Jos. Surf. That's very true.

Sir Pet. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me ; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

Jos. Surf. That's true, to be sure — they would laugh.

Sir Pet. Laugh ! ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

Jos. Surf. No, you must never make it public.

Sir Pet. But then again — that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

Jos. Surf. Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir Pet. Ay — I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian, in whose house he had been so often entertained ; who never in my life denied him — my advice !

Jos. Surf. Oh, 'tis not to be credited ! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure ; but, for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I can not but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine — I disclaim kindred with him : for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir Pet. What a difference there is between you ! What noble sentiments !

Jos. Surf. Yet I can not suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

Sir Pet. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her ; and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have

resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress in that respect for the future ; and, if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live ; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death.

Jos. Surf. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous. — [*Aside.*] I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

Sir Pet. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

Jos. Surf. Nor I, if I could help it. [*Aside.*]

Sir Pet. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Jos. Surf. [*Softly.*] Oh, no, Sir Peter ; another time, if you please.

Sir Pet. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

Jos. Surf. [*Softly.*] I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate ! — [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way !

Sir Pet. And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Jos. Surf. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never —

Re-enter Servant.

Well, sir ?

Ser. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

Jos. Surf. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within — I'm out for the day.

Sir Pet. Stay — hold — a thought has struck me : — you shall be at home.

Jos. Surf. Well, well, let him up. — [*Exit Servant.*] He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. [*Aside.*]

Sir Pet. Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere ; then do you tax

him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

Jos. Surf. Oh, fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick?—to trepan my brother too?

Sir Pet. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: [*Going up.*] here, behind the screen will be—Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat!

Jos. Surf. Ha! ha! ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph, either! Hark'ee, 't is a little French milliner, a silly rogue that plagues me; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

Sir Pet. Ah, Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you——But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Jos. Surf. Oh, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it!

Sir Pet. No! then, faith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

Jos. Surf. Well, go in there.

Sir Pet. Sly rogue! sly rogue! [*Goes into the closet.*]

Jos. Surf. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady Teaz. [*Peeping.*] Couldn't I steal off?

Jos. Surf. Keep close, my angel!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping.*] Joseph, tax him home.

Jos. Surf. Back, my dear friend!

Lady Teaz. [*Peeping.*] Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

Jos. Surf. Be still my life!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping.*] You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Jos. Surf. In, in, my dear Sir Peter!—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Jos. Surf. Neither, brother, I assure you.

Chas. Surf. But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

Jos. Surf. He was, brother; but, hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Chas. Surf. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Jos. Surf. No, sir; but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Chas. Surf. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray?

Jos. Surf. To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Chas. Surf. Who, I? O Lud! not I, upon my word. — Ha! ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he? — or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband?

Jos. Surf. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh —

Chas. Surf. True, true, as you were going to say — then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

Jos. Surf. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this.

[*Raising his voice.*]

Chas. Surf. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement. Besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Jos. Surf. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you —

Chas. Surf. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way — and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father —

Jos. Surf. Well!

Chas. Surf. Why, I believe I should be obliged to —

Jos. Surf. What?

Chas. Surf. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by

naming me with Lady Teazle ; for, i' faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

Jos. Surf. Oh, for shame, Charles ! This retort is foolish.

Chas. Surf. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances ——

Jos. Surf. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

Chas. Surf. Egad, I'm serious ! Don't you remember one day, when I called here ——

Jos. Surf. Nay, pr'ythee, Charles ——

Chas. Surf. And found you together ——

Jos. Surf. Zounds, sir, I insist ——

Chas. Surf. And another time when your servant ——

Jos. Surf. Brother, brother, a word with you ! — [*Aside.*] Gad, I must stop him.

Chas. Surf. Informed, I say that ——

Jos. Surf. Hush ! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Chas. Surf. How, Sir Peter ? Where is he ?

Jos. Surf. Softly, there !

[*Points to the closet.*]

Chas. Surf. Oh, 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth !

Jos. Surf. No, no ——

Chas. Surf. I say, Sir Peter, come into court. — [*Pulls in SIR PETER.*] What ! my old guardian ! — What ! turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog. ? Oh, fie ! Oh, fie !

Sir Pet. Give me your hand, Charles — I believe I have suspected you wrongfully ; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph — 't was my plan !

Chas. Surf. Indeed !

Sir Pet. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did : what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Chas. Surf. Egad, then, 't was lucky you didn't hear any more. Wasn't it, Joseph ?

Sir Pet. Ah ! you would have retorted on him.

Chas. Surf. Ah, ay, that was a joke.

Sir Peter. Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

Chas. Surf. But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that. Mightn't he, Joseph ?

Sir Pet. Well, well, I believe you.

Jos. Surf. Would they were both out of the room ! [Aside.]

Sir Pet. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Re-enter Servant, and whispers JOSEPH SURFACE.

Ser. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Jos. Surf. Lady Sneerwell ! Gad's life she must not come here.
[Exit Servant.] Gentlemen, I beg pardon — I must wait on you downstairs : here is a person come on particular business.

Chas. Surf. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

Jos. Surf. [Aside.] They must not be left together — [Aloud.] I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly. — [Aside to Sir PETER.] Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

Sir Pet. [Aside to JOSEPH SURFACE.] I ! not for the world ! — [Exit JOSEPH SURFACE.] Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

Chas. Surf. Psha ! he is too moral by half ; and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that I suppose he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

Sir Pet. No, no — come, come — you wrong him. No, no ! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect. — [Aside.] I have a great mind to tell him — we should have such a laugh at Joseph.

Chas. Surf. Oh, hang him ! he's a very anchorite, a young hermit !

Sir Pet. Hark'ee — you must not abuse him : he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Chas. Surf. Why, you won't tell him ?

Sir Pet. No — but — this way. — [Aside.] Egad, I'll tell him. — [Aloud.] Hark'ee — have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph ?

Chas. Surf. I should like it of all things.

Sir Pet. Then, i'faith, we will ! I'll be quit with him for discovering me. He had a girl with him when I called. [Whispers.]

Chas. Surf. What ! Joseph ? you jest.

Sir Pet. Hush ! — a little French milliner — and the best of the jest is — she's in the room now.

Chas. Surf. The devil she is !

Sir Pet. Hush ! I tell you.

[*Points to the screen.*]

Chas. Surf. Behind the screen ! 'Slife, let's unveil her !

Sir Pet. No, no, he's coming : — you sha'n't, indeed !

Chas. Surf. Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner !

Sir Pet. Not for the world ! — Joseph will never forgive me.

Chas. Surf. I'll stand by you ——

Sir Pet. Odds, here he is !

[*CHARLES SURFACE throws down the screen.*]

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful !

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable !

Chas. Surf. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me ? Not a word ! — Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter ? What ! is Morality dumb too ? — Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now ! All mute ? — Well — though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another ; so I'll leave you to yourselves. — [*Going.*] Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness. — Sir Peter ! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

[*Exit.*]

Jos. Surf. Sir Peter — notwithstanding — I confess — that appearances are against me — if you will afford me your patience — I make no doubt — but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

Sir Pet. If you please, sir.

Jos. Surf. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria — I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper — and knowing my friendship to the family — she, sir, I say — called here — in order that — I might explain these pretensions — but on your coming — being apprehensive — as I said — of your jealousy — she withdrew — and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

Sir Pet. A very clear account, upon my word ; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

Lady Teas. For not one word of it, Sir Peter !

Sir Pet. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

Lady Teaz. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

Sir Pet. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

Jos. Surf. [*Aside to LADY TEAZLE.*] 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

Lady Teaz. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

Sir Pet. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

Lady Teaz. Hear me, Sir Peter! — I came here on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came, seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

Sir Pet. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

Jos. Surf. The woman's mad!

Lady Teaz. No, sir; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means. — Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me — but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has so penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward — I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him.

[*Exit.*]

Jos. Surf. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows —

Sir Pet. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

Jos. Surf. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to —

Sir Pet. Oh, damn your sentiments!

[*Exeunt SIR PETER and JOSEPH SURFACE, talking.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—THE LIBRARY IN JOSEPH SURFACE'S HOUSE

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and Servant.

JOS. SURF. Mr. Stanley! and why should you think I would see him? You must know he comes to ask something.

Ser. Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

Jos. Surf. Psha! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up?

Ser. I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady——

Jos. Surf. Go, fool!—*[Exit Servant.]* Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before! My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I shan't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however. *[Exit.]*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. What! does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

Row. It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

Sir Oliv. Oh, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

Row. As to his way of thinking, I can not pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir Oliv. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' ends.

Row. Or, rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that "Charity begins at home."

Sir Oliv. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

Row. I doubt you'll find it so; — but he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

Sir Oliv. True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

Row. Without losing a moment.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Oliv. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting. — Mr. Stanley, I presume.

Sir Oliv. At your service.

Jos. Surf. Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down — I entreat you, sir.

Sir Oliv. Dear sir — there's no occasion. — [*Aside.*] Too civil by half!

Jos. Surf. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley?

Sir Oliv. I was, sir; so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

Jos. Surf. Dear sir, there needs no apology; — he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

Sir Oliv. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

Jos. Surf. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

Sir Oliv. I should not need one — my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

Jos. Surf. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing: though people, I know have thought otherwise, and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir Oliv. What! has he never transmitted you bullion — rupees — pagodas?

Jos. Surf. Oh, dear sir, nothing of the kind! No, no; a few presents now and then — china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers — little more, believe me.

Sir Oliv. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds! — Avadavats and Indian crackers! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother: there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. Not I, for one! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. The sums I have lent him! Indeed I have been exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness; however, I don't pretend to defend it — and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Dissembler! — [*Aloud.*] Then, sir, you can't assist me?

Jos. Surf. At present, it grieves me to say, I can not; but whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir Oliv. I am extremely sorry —

Jos. Surf. Not more than I, believe me; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

Sir Oliv. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Jos. Surf. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley. — William, be ready to open the door. [*Calls to Servant.*

Sir Oliv. Oh, dear sir, no ceremony.

Jos. Surf. Your very obedient.

Sir Oliv. Your most obsequious.

Jos. Surf. You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

Sir Oliv. Sweet sir, you are too good!

Jos. Surf. In the meantime I wish you health and spirits.

Sir Oliv. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

Jos. Surf. Sir, yours as sincerely.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Now I am satisfied. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. This is one bad effect of a good character; it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring

the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

Re-enter ROWLEY.

Row. Mr. Surface, your servant: I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

Jos. Surf. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley—a rascal.— [*Aside. Reads the letter.*] Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived!

Row. He is, indeed: we have just parted—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Jos. Surf. I am astonished!—William! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone. [*Calls to Servant.*]

Row. Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

Jos. Surf. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

Row. I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

Jos. Surf. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.— [*Aside.*] Never, to be sure, was any thing so damned unlucky!

Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Jos. Surf. Oh! I'm overjoyed to hear it.— [*Aside.*] Just at this time!

Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

Jos. Surf. Do, do; pray give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I can not express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him.— [*Exit ROWLEY.*] Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill-fortune. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN SIR PETER TEAZLE'S HOUSE

Enter MRS. CANDOUR and Maid.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

Mrs. Can. Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs. Candour?

Maid. Yes, ma'am; but she begs you will excuse her.

Mrs. Can. Do go again; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only

for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress. — [*Exit Maid.*] Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose —

Sir Ben. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface —

Mrs. Can. And Sir Peter's discovery —

Sir Ben. Oh, the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

Mrs. Can. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

Sir Ben. Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all: he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. Can. Mr. Surface? Why, 't was with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

Sir Ben. No, no, I tell you: Mr. Surface is the gallant.

Mrs. Can. No such thing! Charles is the man. 'T was Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

Sir Ben. I tell you I had it from one —

Mrs. Can. And I have it from one —

Sir Ben. Who had it from one, who had it —

Mrs. Can. From one immediately. But here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady Sneer. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Lady Teazle!

Mrs. Can. Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought —

Lady Sneer. Well, there is no trusting appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. Can. To be sure, her manners were a little too free; but then she was so young!

Lady Sneer. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

Mrs. Can. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars?

Lady Sneer. No; but every body says that Mr. Surface —

Sir Ben. Ay, there; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

Mrs. Can. No, no: indeed the assignation was with Charles.

Lady Sneer. With Charles! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

Mrs. Can. Yes, yes; he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

Sir Ben. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not ——

Mrs. Can. Sir Peter's wound! Oh, mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting,

Lady Sneer. Nor I, a syllable.

Sir Ben. No! what, no mention of the duel?

Mrs. Can. Not a word.

Sir Ben. Oh, yes; they fought before they left the room.

Lady Sneer. Pray let us hear.

Mrs. Can. Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

Sir Ben. "Sir," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "you are a most ungrateful fellow."

Mrs. Can. Ay, to Charles ——

Sir Ben. No, no — to Mr. Surface — "a most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir," says he, "I insist on immediate satisfaction."

Mrs. Can. Ay, that must have been to Charles; for 't is very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

Sir Ben. Gad's life, ma'am, not at all — "giving me immediate satisfaction." — On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords ——

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. With pistols, nephew — pistols! I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. Can. Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true?

Crab. Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded ——

Sir Ben. By a thrust in seagoon quite through his left side ——

Crab. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

Mrs. Can. Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter!

Crab. Yes, madam; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

Mrs. Can. I told you who it was: I knew Charles was the person.

Sir Ben. My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

Crab. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude ——

Sir Ben. That I told you, you know ——

Crab. Do, nephew, let me speak! — and insisted on immediate ——

Sir Ben. Just as I said ——

Crab. Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too! A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

Sir Ben. I heard nothing of this.

Crab. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one, and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fire-place, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir Ben. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the true one, for all that.

Lady Sneer. [*Aside.*] I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information. [*Exit.*]

Sir Ben. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Yes, yes, they certainly do say — but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. Can. But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

Crab. Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

Mrs. Can. I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

Crab. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

Sir Ben. Hey! who comes here?

Crab. Oh, this is he: the physician, depend on 't.

Mrs. Can. Oh, certainly! it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Crab. Well, doctor, what hopes?

Mrs. Can. Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

Sir Ben. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred!

Sir Oliv. Doctor! a wound with a small-sword! and a bullet in the thorax! — Oons! are you mad, good people?

Sir Ben. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

Sir Oliv. Truly, I am to thank you for my degree, if I am.

Crab. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

Sir Oliv. Not a word!

Crab. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

Sir Oliv. The devil he is!

Sir Ben. Run through the body —

Crab. Shot in the breast —

Sir Ben. By one Mr. Surface —

Crab. Ay, the younger.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts: however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Sir Ben. Oh, yes, we agree in that.

Crab. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt of that.

Sir Oliv. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes, walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Odds heart, Sir Peter! you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over!

Sir Ben. [*Aside to CRABTREE.*] Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

Sir Oliv. Why, man! what do you out of bed with a small-sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

Sir Pet. A small-sword and a bullet!

Sir Oliv. Ay; these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

Sir Pet. Why, what is all this?

Sir Ben. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

Sir Pet. So, so ; all over the town already ! [*Aside.*

Crab. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

Sir Pet. Sir, what business is that of yours ?

Mrs. Can. Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

Sir Pet. Plague on your pity, ma'am, I desire none of it.

Sir Ben. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

Sir Pet. Sir, sir ! I desire to be master in my own house.

Crab. 'T is no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

Sir Pet. I insist on being left to myself : without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house directly !

Mrs. Can. Well, well, we are going ; and depend on 't, we'll make the best report of it we can. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Leave my house !

Crab. And tell how hardly you've been treated. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Leave my house !

Sir Ben. And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Fiends ! vipers ! furies ! Oh ! that their own venom would choke them !

Sir Oliv. They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. I heard high words : what has ruffled you, sir ?

Sir Pet. Psha ! what signifies asking ? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations ?

Row. Well, I'm not inquisitive.

Sir Oliv. Well, Sir Peter, I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

Sir Pet. A precious couple they are !

Row. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

Sir Oliv. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

Row. Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

Sir Oliv. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

Sir Oliv. Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age! — But how's this, Sir Peter? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

Sir Pet. Psha! plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you.

Row. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

Sir Pet. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

Sir Oliv. Every circumstance.

Sir Pet. What, of the closet and the screen, hey?

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. 'T was very pleasant.

Sir Oliv. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you: ah! ah! ah!

Sir Pet. Oh, vastly diverting! ha! ha! ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, his sentiments! ha! ha! ha! Hypocritical villain!

Sir Oliv. Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Ha! ha! 't was devilish entertaining, to be sure!

Sir Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha! ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

Sir Oliv. But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

Sir Pet. Oh, pray don't restrain your mirth on my account: it does not hurt me at all. I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. Oh, yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining!

Row. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

Sir Oliv. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy.

Sir Pet. Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though 't is a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

Row. We'll follow.

[*Exit SIR OLIVER SURFACE.*]

Sir Pet. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

Row. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

Sir Pet. Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

Row. Oh, this is ungenerous in you!

Sir Pet. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers evidently intended for Charles?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter! laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

Sir Pet. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has? Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly.

Sir Pet. Though, when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

Row. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

Sir Peter. I' faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion —

Sir Pet. Hold, Master Rowley! if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment: I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—THE LIBRARY IN JOSEPH SURFACE'S HOUSE

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady Sneer. Impossible ! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of course no longer oppose his union with Maria ? The thought is distraction to me.

Jos. Surf. Can passion furnish a remedy ?

Lady Sneer. No, nor cunning either. Oh, I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer !

Jos. Surf. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer ; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

Lady Sneer. Because the disappointment doesn't reach your heart ; your interest only attached you to Maria. Had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

Jos. Surf. But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment ?

Lady Sneer. Are you not the cause of it ? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter, and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavour to seduce his wife ? I hate such an avarice of crimes ; 't is an unfair monopoly, and never prospers.

Jos. Surf. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

Lady Sneer. No !

Jos. Surf. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us ?

Lady Sneer. I do believe so.

Jos. Surf. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support ?

Lady Sneer. This, indeed, might have assisted.

Jos. Surf. Come, come ; it is not too late yet. — [*Knocking at the door.*] But hark ! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver : retire to that room ; we'll consult farther when he is gone.

Lady Sneer. Well, but if he should find you out too ?

Jos. Surf. Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake — and you may depend on it I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

Lady Sneer. I have no diffidence of your abilities: only be constant to one roguery at a time.

Jos. Surf. I will, I will! — [*Exit LADY SNEERWELL.*] So! 't is confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's that I certainly — hey! — what — this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't that he should return to tease me just now! I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here — and —

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

Jos. Surf. Sir, 't is impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg — Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

Sir Oliv. No: Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

Jos. Surf. Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

Sir Oliv. Nay, sir —

Jos. Surf. Sir, I insist on't! — Here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir, not one moment — this is such insolence.

[*Going to push him out.*]

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Heyday! what's the matter now? What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

Jos. Surf. So! he has been with you, too, has he?

Chas. Surf. To be sure, he has. Why, he's as honest a little — But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

Jos. Surf. Borrowing! no! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every —

Chas. Surf. O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure.

Jos. Surf. Yet Mr. Stanley insists —

Chas. Surf. Stanley, why, his name 's Premium.

Jos. Surf. No, sir, Stanley.

Chas. Surf. No, no, Premium.

Jos. Surf. Well, no matter which — but ——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 't is the same thing, as you say ; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B. at the coffee-house. [*Knocking.*

Jos. Surf. 'Sdeath ! here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now, I beg, Mr. Stanley ——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium ——

Sir Oliv. Gentlemen ——

Jos. Surf. Sir, by Heaven, you shall go !

Chas. Surf. Ay, out with him, certainly !

Sir Oliv. This violence ——

Jos. Surf. Sir, 't is your own fault.

Chas. Surf. Out with him, to be sure.

[*Both forcing SIR OLIVER out.*

Enter SIR PETER and LADY TEAZLE, MARIA and ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey ! What in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at a first visit !

Lady Teas. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 't was well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly it was ; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

Sir Oliv. Nor of Premium either ; the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman ; and with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

Jos. Surf. Charles !

Chas. Surf. Joseph !

Jos. Surf. 'T is now complete !

Chas. Surf. Very.

Sir Oliv. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty ; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him : judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude !

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritical.

Lady Teaz. And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.

Sir Pet. Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

Chas. Surf. If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me, by and by? [*Aside.*

SIR PETER, LADY TEAZLE, and MARIA retire.

Sir Oliv. As for that prodigal, his brother, there——

Chas. Surf. Ay, now comes my turn: the damned family pictures will ruin me! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

Chas. Surf. Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little. [*Aside.*

Sir Oliv. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself?

To JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. I trust I could.

Sir Oliv. [*To CHARLES SURFACE.*] Well, sir!—and you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. True, sir; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

Sir Oliv. Odd's heart, no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

Chas. Surf. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

Sir Oliv. Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again : the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

Chas. Surf. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

Lady Teas. [*Advancing.*] Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

[*Pointing to MARIA.*]

Sir Oliv. Oh, I have heard of his attachment there ; and with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right — that blush —

Sir Pet. Well, child, speak your sentiments !

Mar. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy ; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

Chas. Surf. How, Maria !

Sir Pet. Heyday ! what's the mystery now ? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else ; and now that he is likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him !

Mar. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

Chas. Surf. Lady Sneerwell !

Jos. Surf. Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed. [*Opens the door.*]

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Sir Pet. So ! another French milliner ! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose !

Lady Sneer. Ungrateful Charles ! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

Chas. Surf. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours ? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

Jos. Surf. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

Sir Pet. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake. — Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE.

I thought his testimony might be wanted : however, it happens un-

luckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

Lady Sneer. A villain ! Treacherous to me at last ! Speak, fellow, have you too conspired against me ?

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons : you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question ; but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

Sir Pet. Plot and counterplot, egad ! I wish your ladyship joy of your negotiation.

Lady Sneer. The torments of shame and disappointment on you all ! [*Going.*

Lady Teas. Hold, Lady Sneerwell — before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself ; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

Lady Sneer. You, too, madam ! — provoking — insolent ! May your husband live these fifty years ! [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Oons ! what a fury !

Lady Teas. A malicious creature, indeed !

Sir Pet. What ! not for her last wish ?

Lady Teas. Oh, no !

Sir Oliv. Well, sir, and what have you to say now ?

Jos. Surf. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say ; however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to — [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Moral to the last !

Sir Oliv. Ay, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar ! — egad you'll do very well together.

Row. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present ?

Snake. Before I go, I beg pardon, once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

Sir Pet. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

Snake. But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

Sir Pet. Hey ! what the plague ! are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life ?

Snake. Ah, sir, consider — I live by the badness of my character ; and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear. [Exit SNAKE.]

Sir Pet. There's a precious rogue !

Lady Teas. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir Oliv. Ay, ay, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Chas. Surf. Thank you, dear uncle.

Sir Pet. What, you rogue ! don't you ask the girl's consent first ?

Chas. Surf. Oh, I have done that a long time — a minute ago — and she has looked yes.

Mar. For shame, Charles ! — I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word —

Sir Oliv. Well, then, the fewer the better ; may your love for each other never know abatement.

Sir Pet. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do !

Chas. Surf. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me ; and I suspect that I owe you much.

Sir Oliv. You do, indeed, Charles.

Sir Pet. Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

Chas. Surf. Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor — my gentle guide. — Ah ! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine ?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst waive thy beauty's sway,

Thou still must rule, because I will obey :

An humble fugitive from Folly view,

No sanctuary near but Love and you :

[To the audience.]

You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,

For even Scandal dies, if you approve.

[Exeunt omnes.]

EPILOGUE

BY GEORGE COLMAN

SPOKEN BY LADY TEAZLE

I, WHO was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one dull rusty weathercock — my spouse!
So wills our virtuous bard — the motley Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
Old bachelors who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate their lives:
Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her —
London will prove the very source of honour.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves;
Such is my case; and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me, untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me condemned to such a dismal doom?
Save money — when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London — just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early crowing cock,
The melancholy ticking of a clock;
In a lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded?
With humble curate can I now retire
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire),
And at backgammon mortify my soul,
That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole?
Seven's the main! Dear sound that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles round a Christmas fire;
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell, the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumèd head, the cushion'd tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum! — card drums I mean,
Spadille — odd trick — pam — basto — king and queen!
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;
Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said 't was clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year.
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalk'd away: —
"Bless'd were the fair like you; her faults who stopp'd
And closed her follies when the curtain dropp'd!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage."





JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

From an engraving by G. H. Hall

BRUTUS
OR
THE FALL OF TARQUIN

BY
JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

THE author of "Home, Sweet Home," was born in New York City, June 9, 1792. Some of his early years were passed in East Hampton, Long Island. He was for a time clerk in a mercantile house, and spent two years at Union College; but all the time he was doing something in the way of writing and publishing, and cultivating a taste for the stage. He made his début at the Park Theatre, February 24, 1809, in the character of Young Norval in Home's tragedy of "Douglas." He played the same part in other American cities, and then in Great Britain. After a career of twenty years as dramatist, actor and manager, he returned to the United States in 1832, and nine years later was made American consul at Tunis, where he remained until he died, April 10, 1852. In 1883 his remains were brought home and re-interred in Washington, D. C. He produced innumerable dramatic pieces, in one of which—"Clari, or the Maid of Milan"—occurred his one famous song. But two of his dramas made a decided mark, in both of which the principal character was played by Edmund Kean. These are "Charles the Second" and "Brutus." The last named, his masterpiece, was produced at Drury Lane in 1818, was at once successful, and is still played. Payne died in poverty, and it is said that after the age of thirteen he never knew what it was to have a home. He never married. William H. C. Hosmer has these pathetic lines on him:—

Unhappy Payne! no pleasure-grounds were thine,
With rustic seats o'ershadowed by the vine;
No children grouped around thy chair in glee,
Like blossoms clinging to the parent tree;
No wife to cheer thy mission upon earth
And share thine hours of sorrow and of mirth,
Or greet thy coming with love's purest kiss—
Joy that survives the wreck of Eden's bliss.
Hands of the stranger ring the mournful knell,—
Homeless the bard who sang of home so well.

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY GEORGE CROLY, SPOKEN BY MR. H. KEMBLE.

TIME rushes o'er us; thick as evening clouds,
Ages roll back : — what calls them from their shrouds?
What in full vision brings their good and great,
The men whose virtues make the nation's fate,
The far, forgotten stars of humankind?
The STAGE — the mighty telescope of mind !
If later, luckless arts that stage profane,
The actor pleads — not guilty of the stain :
He, but the shadow flung on fashion's tide —
Yours, the high will that all its waves must guide :
Your voice alone the great reform secures,
His, but the passing hour — the age is yours.

Our pledge is kept. Here yet no chargers wheel,
No foreign slaves on ropes or scaffolds reel,
No Gallic amazons, half naked, climb
From pit to gallery — the low sublime !
In Shakspeare's halls, shall dogs and bears engage?
Where brutes are actors, be a booth the stage !
And we shall triumph yet. The cloud has hung
Darkly above — but day shall spring — has sprung —
The tempest has but swept, not shook the shrine;
No lamp that genius lit has ceased to shine !
Still lives its sanctity. Around the spot
Hover high spirits — shapes of burning thought —
Viewless — but call them, on the dazzled eye
Descends their pomp of immortality :
Here, at your voice, Rowe, Otway, Southern come
Flashing like meteors through the age's gloom.
Perpetual here — king of th' immortal band,
Sits SHAKSPEARE crowned. He lifts the golden wand,
And all obey; — the visions of the past
Rise as they lived — soft, splendid, regal, vast.
Then Ariel harps along the enchanted wave,
Then the weird sisters thunder in their cave —
The spell is wound. Then shows his mightier art
The Moor's lost soul; the hell of Richard's heart;
And stamps, in fiery warning to all time,
The deep damnation of a tyrant's crime.

To-night we take our lesson from the tomb :
'Tis thy sad cenotaph, colossal Rome !
How is thy helmet cleft, thy banner low !
Ashes and dust are all thy glory now !
While o'er thy wreck a host of monks and slaves
Totter to "seek dishonourable graves."

The story is of Brutus, — in that name
Towered to the sun her eagle's wing of flame !

When sank her liberty, that name of power
 Poured hallowed splendours round its dying hour.
 The lesson lived for man — that heavenward blaze
 Fixed on the pile the world's eternal gaze.

Unrivalled England! to such memories thou
 This hour dost owe the laurel on thy brow;
 Those fixed, when earth was like a grave, thy tread
 Prophet and warrior! 'twixt the quick and dead —
 Those bade the war for man — those won the name
 That crowns thee — famed above all Roman fame.

Now, to our scene — we feel no idle fear,
 Sure of the hearts, the British justice here;
 If we deserve it, sure of your applause —
 Then, hear for Rome, for England, for "our cause."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

BRUTUS.
 TITUS.
 SEXTUS TARQUIN.
 ARUNS.
 CLAUDIUS.
 COLLATINUS.
 VALERIUS.
 LUCRETIUS.
 HORATIUS.
 CELIUS.
 FLAVIUS CORUNNA.
 CENTURION.
 FIRST PLEBEIAN.
 SECOND PLEBEIAN.
 THIRD PLEBEIAN.
 FOURTH PLEBEIAN.
 FIFTH PLEBEIAN.
 TULLIA.
 TARQUINIA.
 LUCRETIA.
 LAVINIA.
 PRIESTESS.

BRUTUS

ACT I

SCENE I.—A STREET IN ROME

Enter VALERIUS and LUCRETIUS.

VAL. Words are too feeble to express the horror
With which my soul revolts against this Tarquin;
By poison he obtained his brother's wife,
Then, by a baser murder, grasped the crown!
These eyes beheld that aged monarch thrown
Down from the senate-house — his feeble limbs
Bruised by the pavement — his time-honoured locks, —
Which from the very robber would have gained
Respect and veneration — bathed in blood!
With difficulty raised, and tottering homeward,
The murderers followed — struck him — and he died!

Luc. Inexpiable crime!

Val. High in her regal chariot, Tullia came —
The corpse lay in the street. The charioteer
Turned back the reins in horror. "On, slave, on!
Shall dead men stop my passage to a throne?"
Exclaimed the parricide. The gore was dashed
From the hot wheels up to her diadem!

Luc. And Heaven's avenging lightnings were withheld!
Here rules this Tullia, while the king, her husband,
Wastes our best blood in giddy, guilty war!
Spirit of Marcus Junius! — Would the gods
Deign to diffuse thy daring through the land,
Rome from her trance with giant spirit would start,
Dash off her fetters, and amaze the world!

Val. Junius, didst say? Oh! tyranny long since
Had sunk — chained — buried in its native hell —
But Tarquin, trembling at his virtues, murdered
Him and his elder son. The younger, Lucius,
Then on his travels, 'scaped the tyrant's sword,
But lost his reason at their fearful fall.

Luc. Ay, the same Lucius, who now dwells with Tarquin,
The jest, the fool, the laughing-stock o' th' court,

Whom the young princes always carry with 'em
To be the butt of their unfeeling mirth.

Val. Hold ! I hear steps. Great things may yet be done,
If we are men, and faithful to our country. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—THE CAMP BEFORE ARDEA

Enter CLAUDIUS and ARUNS, laughing.

Aruns. There is no doctor for the spleen like Lucius.
What precious scenes of folly did he act
When, lately, through the glorious scenes of Greece,
He went with us to Delphi ! But, behold,
Where, full of business, his wise worship comes.

Enter LUCIUS JUNIUS.

Claud. Whither so fast, good Junius, tell us whither ?

Luc. To Rome, to Rome — the queen demands my presence.
The state needs aid, and I am called to court. [*They laugh.*
Am I a fool ? If so, you can not say
I'm the first fool graced by a monarch's favour.

Aruns. Why, Junius, travel has improved thy wit :
Thou speakest shrewdly.

Luc. Do I so, my lord ?
I'm always glad when you and I agree ;
You have just such a wit as I should choose.
Would I could purchase such ! though it might split
My head, as confined air does — water bubbles !

Claud. How say you ? Purchase ? Prithee, what would'st
give ?

Luc. What would I give ? — ten acres of my land.

Aruns. Thy land ! Where lies it ?

Luc. Ask the king, my cousin :
He knows full well. I thank him, he's my steward,
And takes the trouble off my hands.

Claud. Who told thee so ?

Luc. The king himself. Now twenty years are past,
Or more, — since he sent for me from my farm.
"Kinsman," said he, with a kind, gracious smile,
"For the black crime of treason which was charged
Against thy father and thy elder brother,
Their lives have paid : for thee, as I love mercy,
Live and be happy : simple is thy mind " —

Aruns. True, kinsman, true — i' faith, 't is wondrous simple.

Luc. "And that simplicity will be a pledge
That thou wilt never plot against thy sovereign."

Claud. Indeed, for that I'll be your bondsman, Junius.

Luc. "Live in my house, companion of my children.

As for thy land, to ease thee of all care

I'll take it for thy use ; all that I ask

Of thee, is gratitude."

Aruns. And art thou not

Grateful for goodness so unmerited ?

Luc. Am I not ? Never, by the holy gods,

Will I forget it ! 'Tis my constant prayer

To Heaven, that I may one day have the power

To pay the debt I owe him. But stay — stay —

I brought a message to you from the king.

Aruns. Thank the gods, then, for thy good memory, fool !

Luc. The king, your father, sends for you to council,

Where he debates how best to conquer Ardea.

Shall I before, and tell him ye are coming ?

Claud. Ay, or behind, or with us, or stay here —

As thy wits prompt — as suits thy lofty pleasure.

[*Excunt ARUNS and CLAUDIUS, laughing.*]

Luc. [*Alone.*] Yet, 't is not that which ruffles me — the gibes

And scornful mockeries of ill-governed youth —

Or flouts of dastard sycophants and jesters —

Reptiles, who lay their bellies on the dust

Before the frown of majesty ! — All this

I but expect, nor grudge to bear ; the face

I carry, courts it ! Son of Marcus Junius !

When will the tedious gods permit thy soul

To walk abroad in her own majesty,

And throw this vizard of thy madness from thee,

To avenge my father's and my brother's murder ?

(And sweet, I must confess, would be the draught !)

Had this been all, a thousand opportunities

I've had to strike the blow — and my own life

I had not valued as a rush. — But still —

There's something nobler to be done ! — My soul,

Enjoy the strong conception ! Oh ! 't is glorious

To free a groaning country —

To see Revenge

Spring like a lion from the den and tear

These hunters of mankind ! Grant but the time,

Grant but the moment, gods ! If I am wanting,

May I drag out this idiot-feignèd life

To late old age, and may posterity

Ne'er hear of Junius but as Tarquin's fool !

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—ROME—A STATE APARTMENT IN THE PALACE
OF TULLIA

Enter TULLIA, preceded by Guards, Banner Bearers, Ladies, and followed by VALERIUS. She appears perturbed, and speaks apart.

Tul. [Apart.] Why should the steady mind to shadows yield?
And yet this vision shakes my frame with horror !
I thought his spirit thundered in my ear,
“Remember when, with wild ambition’s frenzy,
And all Rome’s empire in your view, you drove
Your chariot-wheels o’er your dead father’s body,
Up to the shouting Forum !” Why, my soul,
Dost thou not shun the remembrance of that hour?
’T was but the cause — the cause — For this base clay,
How differs it from the dull earth we tread on,
When the life’s gone? — But, next, the Sibyl came
Whose mystic book at such a price we bought,
And cried, “The race of Tarquin shall be kings
Till a fool drive them hence, and set Rome free !”
Strange prophecy ! — What fool? — It can not be
That poor dolt, the companion of my sons ! —
Hark thee, Valerius — Know’st thou that same fool
Now in the camp?

Val. I know him well. — A man
Who, when he had a name, was Lucius Junius : —
A braver citizen Rome never boasted,
And wise and learned withal : now changed, alas !
A spectacle which humbles me to look on !

Tul. But is he harmless in his moody humours?

Val. Tame as my horse, which, though devoid of reason,
Shall turn, shall stop, and, at my angry bidding,
Shall kneel till I am throned on his back !
And this shall Junius : the like instinct stirs
Junius and him, — no more.

Tul. [Apart.] Hence, idle fears ! —
— Yet, when he went to Delphi, ’t is given out
The oracle addressed him with strange portents,
And each night since, my dreams have been disturbed
By a wild form, too much resembling his,
Leading our soldiers forth with sword and flame,
Revolters from the camp, to storm the palace.
But he is sent from thence, and shall be watched.

Enter HORATIUS.

Hor. Your orders are obeyed : Lucius awaits.

Tul. Set him before us.

[*Exit HORATIUS.*

[*To VALERIUS.*] Tell me, will he answer
If we do question him?

Val. I think he will :

Yet sometimes, when the moody fit doth take him,
He will not speak for days ; yea, rather starve
Than utter nature's cravings ; then, anon
He'll prattle shrewdly, with such witty folly
As almost betters reason.

HORATIUS returns with LUCIUS JUNIUS.

Tul. Hark thee, fellow,
How art thou called?

Luc. A fool.

Tul. Fool, for thy nature :
Thou answerest well, — but I demand thy name.

Luc. Nothing but fool.

Tul. His faculties are brutish : —
Brutus shall be thy name.

Bru. Thanks to your grace !

Hor. Dost like thy new name, gentle brute?

Bru. So well,
Who will may take the fool. I care not who —
Your highness, an' it like you.

Hor. I the fool !
Sirrah, good words, or I will have thee beaten.

Bru. A fool thou wilt not beat — a brute thou dar'st not,
For the dull ass will kick against his striker,
If struck too harshly.

Tul. Let me hear no more ;
There's mischief in his folly. Send him hence. [*BRUTUS going.*
But stay — I'll search him farther. — Hark thee, Brutus :
Thou wast at Delphi, with our sons the princes —
Tell me — what questions put they to Apollo?

Bru. Your sons did ask who should be chief in Rome.

Tul. Ha ! What replied the oracle to that?

Bru. With pains and strugglings, the prophetic dame
This destiny reported from her god —

“Great and most glorious shalt that Roman be,
Who first shall greet his mother with a kiss.”

Tul. That is fulfilled by Sextus.

Hor. Ay, he straight
Hastened from thence, and kissed the queen, his mother.

Bru. Woe for me, I have no mother ! —
And yet I kissed her first.

Tul. Thou kissed her? Thou?

Bru. Yea, madam; for just then my foot did slip
In the fresh blood of a new-slaughtered victim,
And, falling, I did kiss my mother — earth.

Tul. Oh, that the earth had swallowed thee outright,
Till thou hadst kissed the centre! I perceive,
The gods are leagued with folly to destroy us.
My very blood chills at my heart. — Away!

[*Exit TULLIA, Guards and Ladies, rapidly.*]

Hor. Hark thee, thou Brutus: — I in part suspect
Thou ap'st this folly; if I find thee trifling
Or juggling with the Pythia for predictions,
By all the gods, I'll have thee flayed, thy skin
Striped into thongs, to strangle thee withal.
Dissembling varlet! —

[*Crosses, and strikes BRUTUS, who seizes him.*]

Val. Shame, my lord! forbear!
Threat'ning a fool, you do but wrong yourself.

Hor. But that the princes love his son, brave Titus,
My dagger should have pierced his throat ere now,
And sent him to his mother earth forever!
He shall be watched. — Come, come with me, Valerius.

[*Exit.*]

Val. The gods restore thee to thyself,
And us to thee!

[*Exit.*]

Bru. [*Alone.*] A little longer,
A little longer yet support me, patience!
The day draws on: it presses to the birth —
I see it in the forming womb of time —
The embryo liberty. — Ha! — 't is my son —
Down, rebel nature, down! —

Enter TITUS.

Tit. Welcome to Rome!
Would I might welcome thee to reason, too!

Bru. Give me thy hand — nay, give it me —

Tit. What would'st thou?
Speak to thy son.

Bru. I had a thing to say,
But I have lost it. Let it pass — no matter.

Tit. Look not upon me with those eyes, but speak.
What is it that annoys thee? tell thy friend —
How can I serve thee? What dost lack?

Bru. Preferment.
Thou canst do much at court.

Tit. Ah, this is nothing !

Bru. So much the fitter for a fool's petition,
And a court promise.

Tit. Oh, this trifling racks me.

Bru. Lend me thine ear : I'll tell a secret to thee
Worth a whole city's ransom. This it is :
Nay, ponder it, and lock it in thy heart —
There are more fools, my son, in this wise world,
Than the gods ever made.

Tit. Say'st thou, my father?
Exound this riddle. If thy mind doth harbour
Aught that imports a son like me to know,
Or, knowing, to achieve, declare it.

Bru. Now, my son,
Should the great gods, who made me what thou see'st,
Repent, and in their vengeance cast upon me
The burden of my senses back again —
What wouldst thou say ?

Tit. Oh, my lamented father,
Would the kind gods restore thee to thy reason —

Bru. Then, Titus, then I should be mad with reason.
Had I the sense to know myself a Roman,
This hand should tear this heart from out my ribs,
Ere it should own allegiance to a tyrant.
If, therefore, thou dost love me, pray the gods
To keep me what I am. Where all are slaves,
None but the fool is happy.

Tit. We are Romans —
Not slaves —

Bru. Not slaves ? Why, what art thou ?

Tit. Thy son.
Dost thou not know me ?

Bru. You abuse my folly.
I know thee not. — Wert thou my son, ye gods,
Thou wouldst tear off this sycophantic robe,
Tuck up thy tunic, trim these curled locks
To the short warrior-cut, vault on thy steed ;
Then, scouring through the city, call to arms,
And shout for liberty !

Tit. [*Starts.*] Defend me, gods !

Bru. Ha ! does it stagger thee ?

Tit. For liberty ?
Saidst thou for liberty ? — It cannot be.

Bru. Indeed ! — 't is well — no more.

Tit. What would my father ?

Bru. Begone ! you trouble me.

Tit. Nay, do not scorn me.

Bru. Said I for liberty ? I said it not :
The awful word, breathed in a coward's ear,
Were sacrilege to utter. Hence, begone !
Said I you were my son ? — 'T is false : I'm foolish ;
My brain is weak, and wanders ; you abuse it.

Tit. Ah, do not leave me ; not in anger leave me.

Bru. Anger ? What's that ? I am content with folly ;
Anger is madness, and above my aim ! [*Music heard.*]
Hark ! here is music for thee, — food for love,
And beauty to serve in the rich repast.
Tarquinia comes. Go, worship the bright sun,
And let poor Brutus wither in the shade. [*Exit.*]

Tit. Oh, truly said ! bright as the golden sun
Tarquinia's beauty beams, and I adore ! [*Soft music.*]

TARQUINIA enters, preceded by Damsels, bearing a crown of gold, some with censers, etc., proper for the ceremonials of a dedication to Fortune.

What dedication, or what holy service,
Doth the fair client of the gods provide ?
In the celestial synod is there one
Who will not listen to Tarquinia's prayer ?

Tar. I go to Fortune's temple, to suspend
Upon the votive shrine this golden crown.
While incense fills the fane, and holy hymns
Are chanted for my brother's safe return.
What shall I ask for Titus ?

Tit. Though the goddess,
In her blind bounty, should unthrone the world,
To build me one vast empire, my ambition,
If by thy love unblest, would slight the gift :
Therefore of Fortune I have naught to ask : —
She hath no interest in Tarquinia's heart —
Nature, not Fortune, must befriend me there.

Tar. Thy gentle manners, Titus, have endeared thee,
Although a subject Roman, to Tarquinia.
My brother Sextus wears thee next his heart ;
The queen herself, of all our courtly youth,
First in her favour holds the noble Titus ;
And though my royal father well may keep
A jealous eye upon thy Junian race, —
A race unfriendly to the name of king, —

Yet thee he cherishes ; with generous joy
The monarch sees thy early virtue shoot,
And with a parent's fondness rears its growth.

Tit. Oh ! neither name, nor nature, nor the voice
Of my lost father, could he wake to reason,
Not all the wrongs that tyranny could pile
On my afflicted head, — not all the praise
That patriot gratitude could shower upon me
Can shake the faithful purpose of my soul,
To sever it from love and my Tarquinia.

Tar. Approve that firmness in the shock of trial,
And if my love can recompense thy virtue,
Nor tortures, nor temptations, nor the wreck
Of Rome and empire shall divide me from thee.
To this I pledge my hand. Now to the temple !

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—THE TENT OF SEXTUS IN THE CAMP BEFORE ARDEA

A magnificent banquet. SEXTUS, COLLATINUS, CLAUDIUS, and ARUNS discovered drinking.

Sex. Come, then, here's to the fairest nymph in Italy.
And she's in Rome.

Aruns. Here's to the fairest nymph in Italy ;
And she is not in Rome.

Sex. Where is she, then ?

Aruns. Ask Collatine ; he'll swear she's at Collatia.

Sex. His wife !

Aruns. Even so.

[*They rise and come forward.*]

Claud. Is it so, Collatine ?

Well, 't is praiseworthy, in this vicious age,
To see a young man true to his own spouse.
Oh, 't is a vicious age ! When I behold
One who is bold enough to steer against
The wind of tide and custom, I behold him
With veneration ; 't is a vicious age !

Col. Laugh on, though I'm the subject ! If to love
My wife's ridiculous, I'll join the laugh ;
Though I'll not say if I laugh at or with you !

Aruns. The conscious wood was witness to his sighs,
The conscious Dryads wiped their watery eyes,

For they beheld the wight forlorn, to-day,
And so did I; — but I shall not betray.
Here now he is, however, thanks to me —
That is, his semblance, for his soul dwells hence.
How was it when you parted? *She*: — “My love,
Fear not, good sooth, I’ll very constant prove.”
He: — “And so will I, — for whereso’er I steer,
’Tis but my mortal clay; my soul is here.”

[*All laugh.*]

Sex. And pr’ythee, Collatine, in what array
Did the god Hymen come to thee? How dressed,
And how equipped? I fear me much he left
His torch behind, so that thou couldst not see
A fault in thy beloved; or was the blaze
So burning bright that thy bedazzled eyes
Have since refused their office?

Col. And doth Sextus
Judge by his own experience, then, of others?
To him, I make no doubt, hath Hymen’s torch
Discovered faults enough! what pity ’twas
He had not likewise brought i’ th’ other hand
A mirror, where the prince might read himself.

Sex. I like thee now: thou’rt gay, and I’ll be grave.
As to those dear, delicious creatures, women,
Hear what my own experience has taught me: —
I’ve ever found ’em fickle, artful, amorous,
Fruitful in schemes to please their changeful fancies,
And fruitful in resources when discovered.
They love unceasingly — they never change —
Oh, never! — no! — excepting in the object!
Love of new faces is their first great passion;
Then love of riches, grandeur, and attention!
Knowing all this, I seek not constancy,
But, to anticipate their wishes, rove,
Humour their darling passion, and am blessed!

Col. This is the common cant — the stale, gross, idle,
Unmeaning jargon of all those who, conscious
Of their own littleness of soul, avoid
With timid eye the face of modest virtue;
Who, mingling only with the base, and flushed
With triumphs over those they dare attack,
The weak, the forward, or depraved, declare
(And fain would make their shallow notions current)
That womankind are all alike, and hoot
At virtue, whereso’er she passes by them.
I have seen sparks like these — and I have seen

A little worthless village cur, all night
Bay with incessant noise the silver moon,
While she, serene, throned in her pearlèd car,
Sailed in full state along. — But Sextus' judgment
Owns not his words, — and the resemblance glances
On others, not on him.

Sex. Let it glance where and upon whom it will,
Sextus is mighty careless of the matter.

Now hear what I have seen. I've seen young men,
Who, having fancied they have found perfection —

Col. Sextus, no more — lest I forget myself,
And thee. — I tell thee, prince —

Aruns. Nay, hold !
Sextus, you go too far.

Sex. Why, pray, good sir, may I not praise the wife
Of this same testy, froward husband here,
But on his cheek offence must quivering sit?
And dreamed of insult ! — the abortive child
Of misconstruction, whose near-sighted eye
Discerns not jest for real.

Col. I heed you not — jest on ; I'll aid your humour.
Let Aruns use me for his princely laughter,
Let Claudius deck me with ironic praise ;
But when you touch a nearer, dearer subject,
Perish the man, nay, may he doubly perish,
Who can sit still, and hear, with skulking coolness,
The least abuse, or shadow of a slight
Cast on the woman whom he loves ! though here
Your praise or blame are pointless equally,
Nor really add the least, nor take away
From her true value, more than they could add
To th' holy gods.

Aruns. If that a man might dare to ope his lips
When Collatinus frowns, I would presume
To say one word in praise of my own wife ;
And I will say, could our eyes stretch to Rome,
In spite of the perfections of Lucretia,
My wife, who loves her fireside, and hates gadding,
Would prove far otherwise employed — and better —
Ay, better, as a woman, than the deity
Residing at Collatia.

Sex. [*Aside.*] Well timed ; — I'll seize th' occasion :
View this Lucretia ere I sleep, and satisfy
My senses whether fame has told the truth.

[*Aloud.*] I'll stake my life on 't — Let us mount our horses,

And post away this instant towards Rome.
 That we shall find thy wife, and his, and his,
 Making the most of this their liberty.
 Why, 't is the sex : enjoying to the full
 The swing of license which their husbands' absence
 Affords. I'll stake my life that this is true :
 And that my own (ill as I may deserve it)
 Knows her state best, keeps best within the bounds
 Her matron duties claim ; that she's at home
 While yours are feasting at their neighbours' houses.
 What say'st thou, Collatine,
 On rioting at home ?

Col. Had I two lives, I'd stake them on the trial
 Nor fear to live both out.

Sex. Let us away, then.
 Come, come, my Collatinus, — droop not thus —
 Be gay.

Col. I am not sad —

Sex. But fearful for th' event.

Col. Not in the least.

Sex. A little.

Col. Not a whit :
 You do not know Lucretia.

Sex. But we shall.

Let's lose no time. Come, brothers ! Let's away.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE II. — ROME — AN APARTMENT IN THE PALACE

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. [*Alone.*] Oh, that some light would beam from heav'n
 to teach me
 When to burst forth, and how to gain my purpose !
 For Rome I would resign all other bonds,
 And tear each private tie from my fixed heart.
 — Ha ! — Some one comes ! It is my son ! He seems
 Wrapt in Elysium, and elate with joy !

[*Retires.*]

Enter TITUS.

Tit. 'T is done ! 't is done ! auspicious are the fates :
 Tarquinia's word is pledged, and all is brightness !

Bru. [*Coming down.*] That exclamation was too lofty, boy :
 Such raptures ill become the troubled times —
 Of such, no more.

Tit. Oh ! at an hour like this,

Who could repress the thrill of grateful joy !

Bru. What dost thou mean ?

Tit. Tarquinia.

Bru. What of her ?

Tit. Her vows are pledged,

And Heaven's propitious smile will make her mine.

Bru. Thine ? What ! Thine ? Heaven make Tarquinia thine ?

Away ! away ! Heav'n spurns the race she springs from.

Tit. How ! — Father, wert thou to thyself restored,

Thou wouldst exult to see thy son thus blest.

Our vows are past. They can not be recalled.

And soon the nuptial altar will behold her

My own forever.

Bru. No, Titus, not forever !

If thou art mine, thou canst not be Tarquinia's.

Renounce thy father — or renounce thy love.

Tit. Nay, loose me, father — this is frenzy all.

E'en hadst thou spoken the dictates of thy soul,

(For sure thou canst not know what thou requir'st),

I must not, would not, could not, yield Tarquinia.

Nay — let me go — or my racked heart will break.

Bru. Leave me. Retire. Thine is no Roman heart.

Ere long the moon will change — the moon — my goddess —

And then thou may'st behold a change in Brutus.

Tit. 'Tis as I thought ; Folly resumes its reign.

Look on him, oh, ye gods !

Grant him once more the treasure now withheld,

And to his son restore a long-lost father !

[*Exit.*

Bru. [*Alone.*] I was too sudden. I should have delayed

And watched a surer moment for my purpose.

He must be frightened from this dream of love.

What, shall the son of Junius wed a Tarquin !

As yet I've been no father to my son —

I could be none : but, through the cloud that wraps me

I've watched his mind with all a parent's fondness,

And hailed with joy the Junian glory there.

Could I once burst the chains which now enthrall him,

My son would prove the pillar of his country —

Dear to her freedom as he is to me.

The time may come when heaven will heal our wrongs —

To your hands, mighty powers, I yield myself —

I will not doubt heaven's goodness or Rome's virtue —

Then, hence despair ! Still thou and I are twain !

[*Exit.*

SCENE III. — THE HOUSE OF COLLATINUS, AT COLLATIA — AN
APARTMENT LIGHTED UP

LUCRETIA *discovered surrounded by her Maids, all employed in embroidery and other occupations.* — LAVINIA *is on the right of LUCRETIA.*

Luc. How long is it, Lavinia, since my lord
Hath changed his peaceful mansion for the camp
And restless scenes of war?

Lav. Why, in my simple estimation, madam,
'Tis some ten days, or thereabout, for time
Runs as it should with me — in yours, it may be
Perhaps ten years.

Luc. I do not understand thee.
Say'st thou, with me time runs not as it should?
Explain thy meaning. — What should make thee think so?

Lav. All that I mean is, that if I were married,
And that my husband were called forth to th' wars,
I should not stray through the grove next my house,
Invoke the pensive solitude, and woo
The dull and silent melancholy — brood
O'er my own thoughts alone, or keep myself
Within my house mewed up, a prisoner.
'Tis for philosophers
To love retirement; women were not made
To stand cooped up like statues in a niche,
Or feed on their own secret contemplations.

Luc. Go to; thou know'st not what thou say'st, Lavinia.
I thank the gods, who taught me that the mind,
Possessed of conscious virtue, is more rich
Than all the sumless hoards which Plutus boasts;
And that the chiefest glory of a woman
Is in retirement — that her highest comfort
Results from home-born and domestic joys, —
Her noblest treasure, a deserving husband!
— Who, not a prisoner to the eye alone,
A fair complexion or melodious voice,
Shall read her deeper — nor shall time, which palls
The rage of passion, shake his ardent love,
Increasing by possession. This (again I thank
The gracious gods) — this husband, too, is mine! [Crosses.
— Soft — I hear footsteps! Hour of rapture! Look!
My life, my love, my Collatinus comes!

*Enter COLLATINUS, CLAUDIUS, ARUNS, and SEXTUS. LUCRETIA
rushes into the arms of COLLATINUS.*

My lord, most welcome !

Col. Welcome these, my friends,
Lucretia ! — our right royal master's sons ;
Passing this way, I have prevailed with them
To grace our humble mansion.

Luc. Welcome yourself !
And doubly welcome, that you bring such friends.
Haste, maidens, haste — make ready for our guests !
[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

My heart is full of joy !

Aruns. Rather, fair lady,
You should be angry, that unseasonably,
And with abrupt intrusion, we've thus broke
Upon your privacy.

Luc. No, my good lord ;
Those to whom love and my respect are due
Can ne'er intrude upon me ; had I known
This visit, you, perhaps, might have been treated
With better cheer — not a more kind reception.
This evening little did I think my house
Would have possessed such lodgers.

Claud. Rather, lady,
Such birds of passage — we must hence to-night.
Luc. To-night? Doth not my lord say no to that?

Col. I would, Lucretia ; but it can not be.
If aught the house affords, my dearest love,
To set before your guests, I pray prepare it :
We must be at the camp ere morning dawn.
An hour or two will be the utmost limit
Allowed us here.

Luc. With all the speed I can,
I'll play the caterer ; though I am tempted,
Would that delay your journey, to be tardy,
And prove a sluggish housewife. [Exit

Sex. This is indeed a wife ! Here the dispute
Must end ; —

And, Collatinus, we must yield to thee !

Aruns. I will not envy thee, — but 't is a wife
Of wives — a precious diamond, picked
From out the common pebbles. To have found her
At work among her maids at this late hour,
And not displeased at our rude interruption —

Not to squeeze out a quaint apology,
 As, "I am quite ashamed; so unprepared!
 Who could have thought! Would I had known of it!"
 And such like tacit hints, to tell her guests
 She wishes them away — thou'rt happy, Collatine.

Col. Enough, enough!

The gods forbid I should affect indifference,
 And say you flatter me. I am most happy. —
 But Sextus heeds us not. He seems quite lost.

Sex. Pray, pardon me:

My mind was in the camp. How wine could heat us
 To such a mad exploit, at such a time,
 Is shameful to reflect on; let us mount
 This instant, and return.

Col. Now we are here,
 We shall encroach but little on our time
 If we partake the slender fare together
 Which will, by this, await us. Pray, my lords,
 This way.

[*Exit.*]

Sex. Along — I'll follow straight.

[*Exeunt ARUNS and CLAUDIUS.*]

[*Apart.*] Had she stayed here till now, I should have done
 Nothing but gaze. Nymphs, goddesses
 Are fables; nothing can, in heaven or earth,
 Be half so fair! But there's no hope! Her face,
 Her look, her eye, her manners, speak a heart
 Unknowing of deceit; a soul of honour,
 Where frozen chastity has fixed her throne,
 And unpolluted nuptial sanctity.
 — Peace, undigested thoughts! Down — down! till, ripened
 By further time, ye bloom!

[*Exit.*]

ACT III

SCENE I. — ROME — THE CAPITOL, EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF TAR-
 QUINIUS SUPERBUS, NIGHT, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. [*Alone.*] Slumber forsakes me, and I court the horrors
 Which night and tempest swell on every side.
 Launch forth thy thunders, Capitolian Jove!
 Put fire into the languid souls of men;
 Let loose thy ministers of wrath amongst them,

And crush the vile oppressor ! Strike him down,
Ye lightnings ! Lay his trophies in the dust ! [*Storm increases.*
Ha ! this is well ! flash, ye blue-forked fires !
Loud-bursting thunders, roar ! and tremble, earth !

[*A violent crash of thunder, and the statue of TARQUIN, struck by a flash, is shattered to pieces.*

What ! fallen at last, proud idol ! struck to earth !
I thank you, gods ! I thank you ! When you point
Your shafts at human pride, it is not chance,
'Tis wisdom levels the commissioned blow.
But I — a thing of no account — a slave —
I to your forked lightnings bare my bosom
In vain — for what's a slave — a dastard slave ?
A fool, a Brutus ? [*Storm increases*]. Hark ! the storm rides on !
The scolding winds drive through the clattering rain,
And loudly screams the haggard witch of night.
Strange hopes possess my soul. My thoughts grow wild,
Engender with the scene, and pant for action.
With your leave, majesty, I'll sit beside you
And ruminate awhile. [*Sits on a fragment of the statue.*
Oh, for a cause ! A cause, ye mighty gods !
Soft, what stir is this ?

Enter VALERIUS, followed by a Messenger.

Val. What ! Collatinus sent for, didst thou say ?

Mes. Ay, Collatinus, thou, and all her kinsmen,
To come upon the instant to Collatia ;
She will take no denial. Time is precious,
And I must hasten forth to bring her husband.

[*Crosses behind and exit.*

Bru. [*Apart.*] Ha ! Collatinus and Lucretia's kinsmen !
There's something sure in this — Valerius, too !
Well met — Now will I put him to the test —
Valerius — Hoa !

Val. Who calls me ?

Bru. Brutus.

Val. Go,

Get thee to bed !

[*VALERIUS is departing.*

Bru. Valerius !

Val. Peace,

Thou foolish thing ! Why dost thou call so loud ?

Bru. Because I will be heard ! The time may come
When thou may'st want a fool.

Val. Prythee, begone !

I have no time to hear thy prattle now.

Bru. By Hercules, but you must hear ! [Seising his arm.

Val. You'll anger me.

Bru. Waste not your noble anger on a fool —
'Twere a brave passion in a better cause.

Val. Thy folly's cause enough.

Bru. Rail not at folly —
There's but one wise,
And him the gods have killed.

Val. Killed? Whom?

Bru. Behold !

Oh, sight of pity ! — majesty in ruins !
Down on your knees — down to your kingly idol !

Val. Let slaves and sycophants do that : not I.

Bru. Wilt thou not kneel?

Val. Begone !

Valerius kneels not to the living Tarquin.

Bru. Indeed — Belike you wish him laid as low?

Val. What if I do?

Bru. Jove tells thee what to do —
Strike ! — Oh ! the difference 'twixt Jove's wrath and thine !
He, at the crown'd tyrant aims his shaft :
Thou, mighty man, wouldst frown a fool to silence,
And spurn poor Brutus from thee.

Val. What is this?

Let me look nearer at thee. Is thy mind,
That long-lost jewel, found? — and Lucius Junius,
Dear to my heart, restored? Or art thou Brutus,
The scoff and jest of Rome, and this a fit
Of intermittent reason?

Bru. I am Brutus !

Folly, be thou my goddess ! I am Brutus,
If thou wilt use me so ! — If not, farewell.
Why dost thou pause? Look on me ! I have limbs,
Parts and proportions, shoulders strong to bear,
And hands not slow to strike ! What more than Brutus
Could Lucius Junius do?

Val. A cause like ours
Asks both the strength of Brutus and the wisdom
Of Lucius Junius.

Bru. No more — we're interrupted.

Val. Farewell. Hereafter we'll discourse.
And may the gods confirm the hope you've raised !

[Exit.

Bru. [Alone.] My soul expands ! my spirit swells within me
As if the glorious moment were at hand !

Sure this is Sextus — why has he left the camp?
Alone — and muffled !

Enter SEXTUS, wrapped in a mantle, and crosses.

Welcome, gentle prince !

Sex. Ha ! Brutus here ! — Unhoused amid the storm ?

Bru. Whence com'st thou, prince ? from battle ? from the camp ?

Sex. Not from the camp, good Brutus — from Collatia —
The camp of Venus, — not of Mars, good Brutus.

Bru. Ha !

Sex. Why dost thou start ? — thy kinswoman, Lucretia —

Bru. Well — what of her ? speak !

Sex. Ay, I will speak, —

And I'll speak that shall fill thee with more wonder
Than all the lying oracle declared.

Bru. Nay, prince, not so ; you can not do a deed
To make me wonder.

Sex. Indeed ! Dost think it ?

Then let me tell thee, Brutus, — wild with passion
For this famed matron, — though we met but once, —
Last night I stole in secret from the camp,
Where, in security, I left her husband.
She was alone. I said affairs of consequence
Had brought me to Collatia. She received me
As the king's son, and as her husband's friend —

Bru. [*Apart.*] Patience, oh, heart ! — a moment longer,
patience !

Sex. When midnight came, I crept into her chamber —

Bru. [*Apart.*] Inhuman monster !

Sex. Alarmed and frantic,

She shrieked out, " Collatinus ! Husband ! Help ! "
A slave rushed in — I sprang upon the caitiff,
And drove my dagger through his clamorous throat ;
Then, turning to Lucretia, now half dead
With terror, swore by all the gods at once,
If she resisted, to the heart I'd stab her,
Yoke her fair body to the dying slave,
And fix pollution to her name forever !

Bru. And — and — the matron ? —

Sex. Was mine !

Bru. The furies curse you then ! Lash you with snakes !

When forth you walk, may the red flaming sun
Strike you with livid plagues ! —
Vipers, that die not slowly, gnaw your heart !

May earth be to you but one wilderness !
 May you hate yourself —
 For death pray hourly, yet be in tortures
 Millions of years expiring !

Sex. Amazement ! what can mean this sudden frenzy ?

Bru. What ? Violation ! Do we dwell in dens,
 In caverned rocks, or amongst men in Rome ?

[*Thunder and lightning become very violent.*]

Hear the loud curse of Heaven ! 'T is not for nothing
 The thunderer keeps this coil above your head !

[*Points to the fragments of the statue.*]

Look on that ruin ! See your father's statue
 Unhorsed and headless ! Tremble at the omen !

Sex. This is not madness. Ha ! my dagger lost ! —
 Wretch ! thou shalt not escape me. Ho ! a guard ! —

The rack shall punish thee ! A guard, I say ! [Exit.]

Bru. [*Alone.*] The blow is struck ! the anxious messages
 To Collatinus and his friends explained :

And now, Rome's liberty or loss is certain !

I'll hasten to Collatia — join my kinsmen —

To the moon, folly ! Vengeance, I embrace thee ! [Exit.]

SCENE II.—AN APARTMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COLLATINUS

*COLLATINUS enters wildly, a bloody dagger in his hand, followed by
 VALERIUS and LUCRETIA.*

Col. She's dead ! Lucretia's dead ! I plucked this steel
 From my Lucretia's heart ! This is her blood !
 Howl, howl, ye men of Rome ! Look ! there she lies
 That was your wonder !
 Ye mighty gods, where are your thunders now ?
 Ye men and warriors, have you human hearts ?
 Yet who shall dare to mourn her loss like me ?

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. I dare, — and so dare every honest Roman.

Luc. Whence comes this mad intrusion ? Hence, begone !

Bru. The noble spirit fled ! How died Lucretia ?

Val. By her own hand she died !

Bru. Heroic matron !

Now, now the hour is come ! By this one blow

* The scene which was omitted after the first representation, and for which this introductory speech of Collatinus is substituted, will be found in a note at the end of the play.

Her name's immortal, and her country saved !
Hail ! dawn of glory ! [*Snatching the dagger.*] Hail, thou
sacred weapon !

Virtue's deliverer, hail !

Hear, Romans, hear ! did not the Sibyl tell you,

A fool should set Rome free ? I am that fool :

Brutus bids Rome be free !

Val. What can this mean ?

Bru. It means that Lucius Junius has thrown off

The mask of madness, and his soul rides forth

On the destroying whirlwind, to avenge

The wrong of that bright excellence and Rome !

Luc. Can this be Lucius Junius ?

Val. Ha ! The voice

Of inspiration speaks !

Col. Oh, glorious Brutus,

Let me in tears adore the bounteous gods

Who have restored thee to redress my woes ;

And, in my woes, my country !

Bru. No more of this.

Stand not in wonder. Every instant now

Is precious to your cause. Rise ! Snatch your arms !

[*Kneels.*

Hear me, great Jove ! and thou, paternal Mars,

And spotless Vesta ! To the death, I swear

My burning vengeance shall pursue these Tarquins !

Ne'er shall my limbs know rest till they are swept

From off the earth, which groans beneath their infamy !

This from the bottom of my soul, I swear !

[*Rises.*

Valerius, Collatine, Lucretius, — all —

Here, I adjure ye by this fatal dagger,

All stained and reeking with her sacred blood,

Be partners in my oath — revenge her fall !

All. We swear !

Bru. Well have ye said : and, oh, methinks I see

The hovering spirit of the murdered matron

Look down and bow her airy head to bless you !

Summon your slaves, and bear the body hence

High in the view, through all the streets of Rome,

Up to the Forum ! — On ! The least delay

May draw down ruin, and defeat our glory.

On, Romans, on ! The fool shall set you free !

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE III.—THE PALACE OF TULLIA

Enter FLAVIUS CORUNNA, in haste, meeting HORATIUS.

Cor. My lord, my lord ! Quick, tell me, where is Tullia?

Hor. Whence this alarm? what would'st thou?

Cor. Rebellion rages —

Hor. Rebellion?

Cor. Lucretia,

The wife of Collatinus, is no more.

The furious multitude have borne her body

With shouts of vengeance through the streets of Rome,

And "Sextus Tarquin" is the general cry.

Hor. Where are thy troops? why dost thou dally here,
When thou should'st pay their insolence with death?

Cor. The soldiers join the throng — the gates are closed,
And the mad crowd exclaim, "We banish Tarquin."

Brutus is at their head, and leads them all.

Hor. What miracle is this? How say'st thou, Brutus?

Cor. Ay, the fool Brutus. Now before the rostrum

The body of Lucretia is exposed,
And Brutus there harangues assembled Rome.

He waves aloft

The bloody dagger; all the people hear him

With wildest admiration and applause;

He speaks as if he held the souls of men

In his own hand, and moulded them at pleasure.

They look on him as they would view a god,

Who, from a darkness which invested him,

Springs forth, and, knitting his stern brow in frowns,

Proclaims the vengeful will of angry Jove.

Hor. Fly through the city; gather all the force

You can assemble, and straight hasten hither.

I'll to the queen — Lose not a moment. Hence!

I tremble for Rome's safety! — haste! — begone!

[*Exeunt, HORATIUS, CORUNNA.*]

SCENE IV.—THE FORUM

The populace fill the stage. BRUTUS is discovered upon the rostrum.

The dead body of LUCRETIA is on a bier beneath. COLLATINUS,

LUCRETIUS, and the female attendants of LUCRETIA stand

around her corpse. VALERIUS and others are seen.

Bru. Thus, thus, my friends, fast as our breaking hearts
Permitted utterance, we have told our story;

And now, to say one word of the imposture —
The mask necessity has made me wear.
When the ferocious malice of your king, —
King do I call him? — When the monster, Tarquin,
Slew, as you most of you may well remember,
My father Marcus and my elder brother,
Envyng at once their virtues and their wealth,
How could I hope a shelter from his power,
But in the false face I have worn so long?

First Rom. Most wonderful !

Second Rom. Silence ! he speaks again.

Bru. Would you know why I summoned you together?
Ask ye what brings me here? Behold this dagger,
Clotted with gore ! Behold that frozen corse !
See where the lost Lucretia sleeps in death !
She was the mark and model of the time,
The mould in which each female face was formed,
The very shrine and sacristy of virtue !
Fairer than ever was a form created
By youthful fancy, when the blood strays wild
And never-resting thought is all on fire !
The worthiest of the worthy ! Not the nymph
Who met old Numa in his hallowed walks,
And whispered in his ear her strains divine,
Can I conceive beyond her ; — the young choir
Of vestal virgins bent to her. 'Tis wonderful,
Amid the darnel, hemlock, and base weeds
Which now spring rife from the luxurious compost
Spread o'er the realm, how this sweet lily rose, —
How from the shade of those ill-neighbouring plants
Her father sheltered her, that not a leaf
Was blighted, but, arrayed in purest grace,
She bloomed unsullied beauty. Such perfections
Might have called back the torpid breast of age
To long-forgotten rapture ; such a mind
Might have abashed the boldest libertine,
And turned desire to reverential love
And holiest affection ! Oh, my countrymen !
You all can witness when that she went forth :
It was a holiday in Rome ; old age
Forgot its crutch, labour its task, — all ran ;
And mothers, turning to their daughters, cried,
“ There, there's Lucretia ! ” Now, look ye, where she lies !
That beauteous flower, that innocent sweet rose,
Torn up by ruthless violence — gone ! gone ! gone !

All. Sextus shall die !

[*Shout.*

Bru. But then — the king — his father —

First Rom. What shall be done with him ?

Second Rom. Speak, Brutus !

Third Rom. Tell us ! Tell us !

Bru. Say, would you seek instruction ? would ye ask
What ye should do ? Ask ye yon conscious walls,
Which saw his poisoned brother, saw the incest
Committed there, and they will cry, Revenge !
Ask yon deserted street, where Tullia drove
O'er her dead father's corse, 'twill cry Revenge !
Ask yonder senate-house, whose stones are purple
With human blood, and it will cry, Revenge !
Go to the tomb where lies his murdered wife,
And the poor queen, who loved him as her son,
Their unappeased ghosts will shriek, Revenge !
The temples of the gods, the all-viewing heavens,
The gods themselves, shall justify the cry,
And swell the general sound, Revenge ! Revenge !

All. Revenge ! Revenge !

Bru. And we will be revenged, my countrymen !
Brutus shall lead you on ; Brutus, a name
Which will, when you're revenged, be dearer to him
Than all the noblest titles earth can boast.

[*Shout.*

First Rom. Live Brutus !

Second Rom. Valiant Brutus !

Third Rom. Down with Tarquin !

Second Rom. We'll have no Tarquins !

First Rom. We will have a Brutus !

Third Rom. Let's to the Capitol, and shout for Brutus !

Bru. I your king ?

Brutus your king ? — No, fellow-citizens !
If mad ambition in this guilty frame
Had strung one kingly fibre, — yea, but one —
By all the gods, this dagger which I hold
Should rip it out, though it entwined my heart.

Val. Then I am with thee, noble, noble Brutus !
Brutus, the new restored ! Brutus, by Sibyl,
By Pythian prophetess foretold, shall lead us !

Bru. Now take the body up. Bear it before us
To Tarquin's palace ; there we'll light our torches,
And, in the blazing conflagration, rear
A pile for these chaste relics, that shall send
Her soul amongst the stars. On ! Brutus leads you !

[*Exeunt, the mob shouting.*

ACT IV

SCENE I. — A COURT BELONGING TO TARQUIN'S PALACE — IN
THE FRONT A GRAND ENTRANCE, WITH FOLDING GATES
CLOSED

Enter TULLIA.

Tul. [*Alone.*] Gods! whither shall a frantic mother fly?
Accursèd siege of Ardea! Tarquin, Tarquin,
Where art thou? Save thy wife, thy son, thy city!

Enter TITUS.

Tit. Where is the prince? where's Sextus?

Tul. Where? Oh, heavens!

His madness hath undone us! Where is Sextus?
Perhaps ev'n now the barbarous ruffians hurl him
Alive into the flames, or, piecemeal, drag
Along the rebel streets his mangled trunk —

Tit. No more! I'll save him, or avenge —

[*Going, HORATIUS meets and stops him.*

Hor. Turn, noble Roman, turn;

Set not your life upon a desperate stake!

Hark! they are at thy gates!

[*Shout.*

[*Shout.*

Tul. Does my son live!

Hor. Furious he sprang upon the rebel throng,
And hewed his desperate passage: but the time
Admits no further question — Save yourself!

Tul. Who leads them on?

Hor. Your new-named fool, your Brutus.

Tit. Death! my father?

Tul. Brutus in arms!

Oh, Sibyl! Oh, my fate! farewell to greatness!
I've heard my doom.

Tit. Earth, earth, enclose me!

Tul. Hark! it bursts upon us!

[*Shouts are heard.*

Hor. Ha! nearer yet! Now be propitious, Mars!

Now nerve my arm with more than mortal fury,
Till the dissembler sink beneath its vengeance.

[*Exit.*

Tul. Fly! save my child — save my — save your Tarquinia!

Tit. Or die defending.

[*Exit.*

[*The shouts and tumult become very violent, and the battering at the gate and wall commences.*]

Tul. Ah! if amidst my legions I might fall,

Death were not then inglorious ; but to perish
 By the vile scum of Rome — hunted by dogs —
 Baited to death by brawling, base mechanics —
 Shame insupportable !

[*Shouts heard — the gate and wall are shattered down, the palaces behind are in flames — the soldiers and populace rush over the ruins — BRUTUS appears in the midst of them, and advances to the front.*]

Bru. Seize the parricide !

[*They advance and surround her.*]

Tul. Avaunt ! I am your queen.

Bru. Tarquins ! we cast you from us.

Tul. Give me a sword, and let me fall like Tullia.

Bru. No, we reserve our swords for nobler uses
 Than to make war with women : to the Tarquins,
 To your adulterous son, we leave that shame.

Tul. If then 't will better sate thy cruelty,
 Precipitate me quick into those flames,
 And with the wreck of empire mix my ashes.

Bru. Take her to Rhea's temple ; take her hence,
 And lodge her with her ancestors !

Tul. Ye gods !

My father's sepulchre ! — I'll not approach it !

Bru. 'T will furnish wholesome recollection. Hence !

Tul. Not to that fatal place ! Send me not thither !

Bru. 'T is fixed.

Tul. Choose the most loathsome dungeon — there confine
 me,

Or give me death instead. My heart recoils
 Against that temple.

Bru. There, and only there,
 By your dead father's tomb, you must abide
 The judgment of the state.

Tul. Then, by the gods,
 Whom, for the last time, I invoke, —
 If no means else
 Of ready death present themselves,
 No particle of food shall pass these lips,
 Till, in the void of nature, hungry madness,
 With blank oblivion entering, shall confound
 And cancel all perception.

[*Exit TULLIA guarded.*]

Enter TRITUS, who meets BRUTUS as he is going off.

Tit. Turn, oh, my father,
 And look upon thy son !

Bru. What would'st thou? speak.

Tit. If thou hast reason, oh, have mercy also!
But if in madness thou hast done this deed —

Bru. I am not mad, but as the lion is,
When he breaks down the toils that tyrant craft
Hath spread to catch him. Think not we will suffer
These monsters to profane the air of Heaven.
Shall Titus, then, oppose our great design?
Shall Brutus meet a recreant in his son?
Banish this folly! — Have a care! I know thee —

There is a lurking passion at thy heart,
Which leaves but half a soul for Rome and me!

Tit. You wrong me. Like a Roman I exult
To see Lucretia's murder thus avenged —
And like a son glory in such a father!
Yet hear me through. — Nay, do not frown, but hear me —

Bru. Go on; confess thy weakness, and dismiss it.

Tit. 'T was in the sleep of my dear father's reason,
When Tarquin's freed-man, in a saucy mood,
Vented vile jests at thy unhappy weakness;
Stung to the quick, I snatched a weapon up,
And felled him to my foot.

Bru. Why, 't was well done.
The knave was saucy, and you slew him — On!

Tit. 'T was on this very spot Tarquinia stood,
And when the wrathful father had denounced
Immediate death on this my filial act,
She with the tongue of interceding pity,
And tears that streamed in concert with her suit,
Implored, prevailed, and gave me life — and love.

Bru. 'T is well. Behold, I give her life for life:
Rome may be free, although Tarquinia lives.
This I concede; but more if thou attemptest, —
By all the gods! — Nay, if thou dost not take
Her image, though with smiling Cupids decked,
And pluck it from thy heart, there to receive
Rome and her glories in without a rival,
Thou art no son of mine, thou art no Roman!

[*Exit.*

Enter TARQUINIA.

Tar. Save, save me, Titus! oh, amid the crash
Of falling palaces, preserve Tarquinia!
Or, do I meet in thee a double rebel,
Traitor alike to me and to your king?
Speak, I conjure thee! Will the son of Brutus

Now take me to his pity and protection,
Or stab with perfidy the heart that loves him !

Tit. Cruel suspicion ! Oh, adored Tarquinia,
I live but to preserve you ! You are free :
I have my father's sanction for your safety !

Tar. I scorn a life that is preserved by Brutus !
I scorn to outlive parents, brothers, friends !
I'll die with those

Whom this dire night hath murdered !

Tit. Who are murdered ?

Whom hath the sword of Brutus slain ? Not one
Of all thy kindred —

Tar. Say'st thou ? Lives my mother ?

Tit. She lives — and Sextus — even he escapes
The storm which he has raised, and flies to Ardea.

Tar. Speed him, ye gods, with eagle swiftness thither !
And may those thunders which now shake the walls
Of tottering Ardea, like a whirlwind burst
On this devoted city, 'whelm its towers,
And crush the traitorous hive beneath their ruins !
Now, Titus, where is now thy promised faith ?
Didst thou not swear no dangers should divide us ?

Tit. I did ; and, constant to my oath, behold me
Thy faithful guardian in this night of terrors.

Tar. Be still my guardian ; snatch me from these terrors,
Bear me to Ardea, be the friend of nature,
And give the rescued daughter to the arms
Of her protecting parent ; thus you gain
The praise of men, the blessings of the gods,
And all that honour, all that love can grant.

Tit. Despair ! Distraction ! Whither shall I turn me ?

Tar. Why do you waver ? Cast away this weakness ;
Be glorious in your cruelty, and leave me.
By all the demons who prepare the heart
To rush upon the self-destroying steel,
The same dire moment which gives thee to Brutus,
Gives me to death !

Tit. Horror ! Tarquinia, hold !

Tar. Lo ! I am armed. Farewell ! How I have loved you,
My death shall witness — how you have deceived me,
Let your own conscience tell. — Now to your father !
Now go, and mingle with the murderers ;
Go, teach those fiends what perjury can do,
And show your hands bathed in Tarquinia's blood.
The filial deed shall welcome you to Brutus,

And fill his gloomy soul with savage joy.

Tit. Take, take me hence forever ! Let me lose,
In these dear arms, the very name of son,
All claims of nature, every sense but love !

Tar. The gods that guard the majesty of Rome,
And that sweet power, whose influence turns thy heart
To pity and compliance, shall reward
And bless thee for the deed !

Tit. Can he be blest,
On whom a father's direful curse shall fall ?

Tar. A madman's imprecation is no curse.
Be a man.

Tit. Oh, while thy love upholds me, I can stand
Against the world's contempt ; remember, only,
For whose dear sake I am undone ; remember,
My heart was honour's once ——

Tar. And shall be ever !
Come, I will show thee where bright honour grows,
Where thou shalt pluck it from the topmost branch,
And wear it in its freshest, fairest bloom.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A STREET IN ROME

Enter HORATIUS and CELIUS.

Hor. Brutus and Collatinus are appointed
To sovereign sway, as consuls for the year.
Their self-elected senate meets to-morrow,
Though some remain, too honest for their views.
These for security exact conditions —
They ask a chief, whose well-established fame
May win the hearts of this inconstant people ;
A chief so brave, that, should we prove victorious,
He may compel the king to keep his faith ;
Or, if we fall, boldly revenge our deaths —
And such a chief I've found.

Cel. Indeed ! In whom ?

Hor. The consul's son — his much-loved son — young Titus.

Cel. What ! to rebel against his father's power ?

Hor. Ay, he is ours. This very night, Tarquinia
Will lead him forth to the Quirinal gate,
Whence they straight hasten to the camp at Ardea.
Impetuous youth is wrought upon with ease.
Though 't is his father's frown upon his love,
And early vows pledged to the fair Tarquinia,
Alone which prompt him thus to lead our band ;

Once in our power, we'll mould him to our ends :
His very name will prove a tower of strength,
And Rome once more shall be restored to Tarquin.

Cel. Bravely resolved ! But tell me — where is Tullia !

Hor. A captive, and confined in Rhea's temple ;
Watched by the vestals, who there guard the flame
Upon the tomb where lies her murdered father.
Unhappy Tullia ! our swords shall soon release thee.
Come ! Hence at once ! The hour draws near — away !
Ere two days pass these reptiles shall be crushed,
And humbled Rome sue for its monarch's pardon.

[*Exeunt* HORATIUS and CELIUS.

Enter LUCRETIUS and VALERIUS.

Val. That was Horatius 'parted, was it not?

Luc. The same.

Val. Am I deceived? Methinks I heard
Something like discontent and treason muttered.

Luc. I fear all is not safe. Assembled groups
Of Tarquin's friends have been seen close in conference
Muttering his name aloud. Ay, and some base,
Degenerate Romans, called for a surrender.

Val. Horatius' arts may justly wake suspicion :
And Rome, we know, is still disgraced by many
Too base, too sordid, to be bravely free.
Let us go forth and double all the guards,
See their steps watched, and intercept their malice.

Luc. Nay, there's a safer course than that ; arrest them !

Val. The laws and rights we've sworn to guard, forbid it !
Let them be watched. We must not venture farther.
To arrest a Roman upon bare surmise,
Would be at once to imitate the tyrant
Whom we renounce, and from his throne have driven !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — ROMÉ — A LITTLE DARK — THE TEMPLE OF RHEA,
WITH A LARGE CENTRAL DOOR LEADING TO THE TOMB OF
SERVIUS TULLIUS, LATE KING OF ROME. ON ONE SIDE OF
THE STAGE A STATUE OF RHEA, AND ON THE OTHER A
STATUE OF VESTA, WITH ALTARS, AND INCENSE BURNING
BEFORE EACH

Priestess of Rhea. Virgins of the Temple.

Pr. Daughters of Rhea, since the lords of Rome
Have to your holy hands consigned the charge
Of their now captive Queen, inform the Priestess

How your sad prisoner abides her durance.
Is her proud soul yet humbled, or, indignant,
Doth it still breathe defiance and contempt?
Vir. Sullen and silent, she resolves on death :
She will not taste of nourishment. She comes.

Enter TULLIA.

Pr. I pray you, royal lady, be entreated —

Tul. I tell you, no !

Pr. Think what a train of weary hours have passed
Since you had taste of food.

Tul. 'T is well !

The fewer are to come.

Pr. How can you live to meet your royal husband,
To fold your children in your arms again,
If you resist support ?

Tul. Ha ! well remembered !

What news from Ardea ? Will he march for Rome ?
Hark ! Do you hear his trumpet ? Is he coming ?
Ay, this is hope, and worth the feeding.

'T is well — 't is well !

But, tell me — doth the king know of this kindness ?

Pr. What king ?

Tul. What king ?

Brutus, the king of Rome, — knows he of this ?

Pr. He does.

Tul. And would he I should live ?

Pr. He would.

Tul. Merciful villain !

Yes, he would have me live to page his triumphs :

I know the utmost of his mercy —

Subtle traitor !

I'll not taste food, though immortality

Were grafted to each atom — Hark ! What's that ?

Heard you that groan ?

Pr. It is your fancy's coinage.

Tul. Again ! 'T is deep and hollow :

It issues from the vault — Set the door open !

Open, I say.

Pr. It is your father's sepulchre !

Tul. My father ! righteous gods ! I killed my father !
Horrible retribution !

Pr. Wretched daughter,
If thou hast done this deed, prepare thy spirit,
By wholesome meditation, for atonement,

And let no passion interrupt the task
Of penitence and prayer.

Tul. I'll pray no more.

There is no mercy in the skies for murder,
Therefore no praying, none.

I have a plea for my impenitence —
Madness!

These groans have made me mad; all the night through
They howled distraction to my sleepless brain!

You've shut me up with furies to torment me,
And starved me into madness. Hark! again!

Unbar the door! Unbar it! By the gods,
The voice is more than human which I hear!

I'll enter there — I will be satisfied,
Although the confirmation should present
His awful form —

[*She rushes forward. The Priestess and Vestals, in confusion and alarm, spring to the bar, which, falling with a crash, the door flies open, and discovers a monumental figure of SERVIUS TULLIUS, with lamps burning on each side of it. TULLIA recoils, shrieks, falls, and expires. The others group around her.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—A STREET IN ROME, WITH THE TEMPLE OF MARS IN VIEW

*Enter BRUTUS and COLLATINUS, as Consuls, with Lictors, VALERIUS,
LUCRETIUS, and numerous followers.*

Bru. You judge me rightly, friends. The purpled robe,
The curule chair, the lictors' keen-edged axe,
Rejoice not Brutus; — 't is his country's freedom!
When once that freedom shall be firmly rooted,
Then, with redoubled pleasure, will your consul
Exchange the splendid miseries of power,
For the calm comforts of a happy home.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. All health to Rome, her Senate, and her consuls!

Bru. Speak on — What message hast thou to impart?

Mes. I bring intelligence of Sextus Tarquin,
Who, on arriving at a neighbouring village,
Was known, and by the people stoned to death.

[*Exit.*]

Bru. Now, Lucretia,
Thy ghost may cease to wander o'er the earth,
And rest in peace !

Luc. Heaven's ways are just !

Col. Yet I regret the villain should be slain
By any hand but mine !

Enter a Centurion.

Cent. Health to Brutus !
Shame and confusion to the foes of Rome !

Bru. Now, without preface, to your business.

Cent. As I kept watch at the Quirinal gate,
Ere break of day, an armèd company
Burst on the sudden through the barrier guard,
Pushing their course for Ardea. Straight alarmed,
I wheeled my cohort round, and charged 'em home :
Sharp was the conflict for a while, and doubtful,
Till, on the seizure of Tarquinia's person,
A young Patrician —

Bru. Ha ! Patrician ?

Cent. Such
His dress bespoke him, though to me unknown.

Bru. Proceed ! — What more ?

Cent. The lady being taken,
This youth, the life and leader of the band,
His sword high waving in the act to strike,
Dropped his uplifted weapon, and at once
Yielded himself my prisoner. Oh, Valerius,
What have I said, that thus the consul changes ?

Bru. Why do you pause ? Go on.

Cent. Their leader seized,
The rest surrendered. Him, a settled gloom
Possesses wholly, nor, as I believe,
Hath a word passed his lips, to all my questions
Still obstinately shut.

Bru. Bring him before us. *[Exit Centurion.]*

Val. Oh, my brave friend, horror invades my heart.

Bru. Silence — be calm.

Val. I know thy soul,
A compound of all excellence, and pray
The mighty gods to put thee to no trial
Beyond a mortal bearing.

Bru. No, they will not —

Nay, be secure, — they cannot. Pr'ythee, friend,
Look out, and if the worst that can befall me

Be verified, turn back, and give some sign
What thou hast seen — Thou can'st excuse this weakness,
Being thyself a father. [*Valerius gives the sign.*
Ha! — enough :
I understand thee : — Since it must be so,
Do your great pleasure, gods ! Now, now it comes !

*TITUS and TARQUINIA are brought in, guarded. TITUS advances,
TARQUINIA remains in the background.*

Tit. My father ! — Give me present death, ye powers !

Cent. What have I done ! — Art thou the son of Brutus ?

Tit. No, Brutus scorns to father such a son !

Oh, venerable judge, wilt thou not speak ?
Turn not away ; hither direct thine eyes,
And look upon this sorrow-stricken form,
Then to thine own great heart remit my plea,
And doom as nature dictates.

Val. Peace, — you'll anger him —

Be silent, and await ! Oh, suffering mercy,
Plead in a father's heart, and speak for nature !

[*BRUTUS turns away from his son, waves his hand to the Centurion
to remove him to a farther distance, and then walks forward
and calls COLLATINUS to him.*

Bru. Come hither, Collatinus. The deep wound
You suffered in the loss of your Lucretia
Demanded more than fortitude to bear ;
I saw your agony — I felt your woe —

Col. You more than felt it — you revenged it, too.

Bru. But, ah ! my brother consul, your Lucretia
Fell nobly, as a Roman spirit should —
She fell, a model of transcendent virtue.

Col. My mind misgives. What dost thou aim at, Brutus ?

Bru. That youth — my Titus — was my age's hope —
I loved him more than language can express —
I thought him born to dignify the world.

Col. My heart bleeds for you — he may yet be saved —

Bru. Consul — for Rome I live — not for myself :
I dare not trust my firmness in this crisis,
Warring 'gainst everything my soul holds dear.
Therefore return without me to the Senate :
Haply my presence might restrain their justice.
Look that these traitors meet their trial straight, —
And then despatch a messenger to tell me
How the wise fathers have disposed of — Go !

[*COLLATINUS goes out, attended, and as BRUTUS is departing, TARQUINIA rushes forward.*]

Tar. Stop, — turn and hear the daughter of your king !
I speak for justice — mercy, thou hast none,
For him, your son : —
By gratitude and love I drew him off —
I preserved his life !
Who shall condemn him for protecting mine ?

Bru. We try the crime ; the motive, Heaven will judge.
My honour he hath stabbed — I pardon that.
He hath done more — he hath betrayed his country.
That is a crime which every honest heart
That beats for freedom, every Roman feels,
And the full stream of justice must have way.

Tar. Because thy soul was never swayed by love,
Canst thou not credit what his bosom felt ?

Bru. I can believe that beauty such as thine
May urge a thousand fascinating snares
To lure the wavering and confound the weak ;
But what is honour, which a sigh can shake ?
What is his virtue, whom a tear can melt ?
Truth — valour — justice — constancy of soul —
These are the attributes of manly natures : —
Be woman e'er so beauteous, man was made
For nobler uses than to be her slave.

Tar. Hard, unrelenting man ! Are these the fruits
Of filial piety, — and hath thy son
Wearied the gods with pray'rs, till they restored
A mind, and gave thee reason ? Would to Heaven
They'd given thee mercy, too ! 't would more become thee
Than these new ensigns, Brutus ; more than all
Thy lictors, haughty consul, — or thy robes
Dipped in the blood, — oh, horror ! — of a son ! —

Bru. No more — By all the gods, I'll hear no more !

Tit. A word, for pity's sake. Before thy feet,

[*To BRUTUS.*

Humbled in soul, thy son and prisoner kneels —
Love is my plea : a father is my judge ;
Nature my advocate ! — I can no more :
If these will not appease a parent's heart,
Strike through them all, and lodge thy vengeance here !

Bru. Break off ! I will not, can not hear thee further !
The affliction nature hath imposed on Brutus,
Brutus will suffer as he may. — Enough
That we enlarge Tarquinia. Go, be free !

Centurion, give her conduct out of Rome !

Lictors, secure your prisoner. Point your axes.

To the Senate — On !

[*Exeunt BRUTUS and Guards.*]

Cent. Come, lady, you must part.

Tar. Part ! Must we part ?

You must not tear him from me ; I will die

Embracing the sad ruin I have made.

Cent. You've heard the consul.

Tar. Thou hast heard the king,

Fought for him while he led you on to conquest.

Thou art a soldier, and should'st spurn an office

Which malefactors, though condemned for murder,

Would rather die by torture than perform.

Tit. If thou dost wish

That I should 'scape the peril of my fate,

I conjure thee to accord

To Brutus, and accept his promised safeguard.

Your words, your looks, your beauty, feed his wrath ;

In that fair face he reads my guilty love,

And pity flies his heart. Let passion pause ;

Leave me to solitude, to silence leave me :

Then nature's gentlest whispers may be heard.

Tar. Say'st thou ? Conduct me to the dreariest waste

That ever melancholy madness trod,

And let my swelling heart in silence burst ;

Plunge me in darkness, shroud this fatal form

In everlasting night, I am content !

Lo ! I obey ! This is the test of love :

This is the sacrifice — I part to save thee ! [*Officers advance.*]

Tit. See, I am warned. Farewell, my life's last joy.

When my eyes lose thy image, they may look

On death without dismay. To those blessed powers

Who gave thee every virtue, every grace

That can ensure perfection, I commit thee.

[*They embrace, and are torn asunder. TITUS is carried off by the Lictors, and TARQUINIA faints and is borne off by the Centurion and Guards.*]

SCENE II.—ROME — AN APARTMENT IN THE HOUSE OF BRUTUS

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. Like a lost, guilty wretch, I look around

And start at every footstep, lest it bring

The fatal news of my poor son's conviction ! —

Oh, Rome, thou little know'st — No more — It comes.

Enter VALERIUS.

Val. My friend, the Senate have to thee transferred
The right of judgment on thy son's offence.

Bru. To me !

Val. To thee alone.

Bru. What of the rest ?

Val. Their sentence is already passed.

E'en now, perhaps, the lictor's dreaded hand
Cuts off their forfeit lives.

Bru. Say'st thou, that the Senate have to me referred
The fate of Titus ?

Val. Such is their sovereign will.

They think you merit this distinguished honour.

A father's grief deserves to be revered :

Rome will approve whatever you decree.

Bru. And is his guilt established beyond doubt ?

Val. Too clearly.

Bru. Oh, ye gods ! ye gods ! Valerius !

Val. What would'st thou, noble Roman ?

Bru. 'Tis said thou hast pulled down thine house, Valerius,
The stately pile that with such cost was reared.

Val. I have ; but what doth Brutus then infer ?

Bru. It was a goodly structure : I remember
How fondly you surveyed its rising grandeur. —
With what a — fatherly — delight you summoned
Each grace and ornament, that might enrich
The — child — of your creation, — till it swelled
To an imperial size, and overpeered
The petty citizens, that humbly dwelt
Under its lofty walls, in huts and hovels,
Like emmets at the foot of tow'ring Ætna :
Then, noble Roman, then with patriot zeal,
Dear as it was, and valued, you condemned
And levelled the proud pile ; and, in return,
Were by your grateful countrymen surnamed,
And shall to all posterity descend, —
Poplicola.

Val. Yes, Brutus, I conceive
The awful aim and drift of thy discourse —
But I conjure thee, pause ! Thou art a father.

Bru. I am a Roman consul ! — What, my friend,
Shall no one but Valerius love his country
Dearer than house, or property, or children ?
Now, follow me ; — and, in the face of Heaven,

I'll mount the judgment seat : there, see if Brutus
 Feel not for Rome as warmly as Poplicola.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—EXTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF MARS—SENATORS,
 CITIZENS, COLLATINUS, AND LUCRETIUS, DISCOVERED. A
 TRIBUNAL, WITH A CONSULAR CHAIR UPON IT

BRUTUS *enters, followed by VALERIUS—he bows as he passes, and
 ascends the tribunal.*

Bru. Romans, the blood which hath been shed this day
 Hath been shed wisely. Traitors, who conspire
 Against mature societies, may urge
 Their acts as bold and daring ; and though villains,
 Yet they are many villains — But to stab
 The cradled innocent, as these have done, —
 To strike their country in the mother-pangs
 Of struggling child-birth, and direct the dagger
 To freedom's infant throat — is a deed so black,
 That my foiled tongue refuses it a name. [A pause.
 There is one criminal still left for judgment —
 Let him approach.

TITUS *is brought in by the Lictors, with their axes turned edgewise
 towards him.*

Pris—on—er —
 Romans, forgive this agony of grief —
 My heart is bursting — Nature must have way —
 I will perform all that a Roman should —
 I can not feel less than a father ought !

[*Gives a signal to the Lictors to fall back, and advances from the
 judgment-seat.*]

Well, Titus, speak — how is it with thee now ?
 Tell me, my son, art thou prepared to die ?

Tit. Father, I call the powers of heaven to witness
 Titus dares die, if so you have decreed.
 The gods will have it so ?

Bru. They will, my Titus :
 Nor heav'n, nor earth, can have it otherwise.
 It seems as if thy fate were pre-ordained
 To fix the reeling spirits of the people,
 And settle the loose liberty of Rome.
 'T is fixed ; — oh, therefore, let not fancy cheat thee :
 So fixed thy death, that 't is not in the power
 Of mortal man to save thee from the axe.

Tit. The axe ! — Oh, heaven ! — Then must I fall so basely ?
What, shall I perish like a common felon ?

Bru. How else do traitors suffer ? — Nay, Titus, more —
I must myself ascend yon sad tribunal —
And there behold thee meet this shame of death,
With all thy hopes, and all thy youth upon thee. —
See thy head taken by the common axe, —
All, — if the gods can hold me to my purpose, —
Without one groan, without one pitying tear.

Tit. Die like a felon ? — Ha ! a common felon ! —
But I deserve it all : — yet here I fail —
This ignominy quite unmans me !

Oh, Brutus, Brutus ! Must I call you father, [*Kneels.*]
Yet have no token of your tenderness,
No sign of mercy ? Not even leave to fall
As noble Romans fall, by my own sword ?
Father, why should you make my heart suspect
That all your late compassion was dissembled ?
How can I think that you did ever love me ?

Bru. Think that I love thee by my present passion,
By these unmanly tears, these earthquakes here,
These sighs that strain the very strings of life, —
Let these convince you that no other cause
Could force a father thus to wrong his nature.

Tit. Oh, hold, thou violated majesty : [*Rises.*]
I now submit with calmness to my fate.

Come forth, ye executioners of justice —
Come, take my life, — and give it to my country !

Bru. Embrace thy wretched father. May the gods
Arm thee with patience in this awful hour.
The sovereign magistrate of injured Rome
Condemns

A crime thy father's bleeding heart forgives.
Go — meet thy death with a more manly courage
Than grief now suffers me to show in parting ;
And, while she punishes, let Rome admire thee !
Farewell ! Eternally farewell ! —

Tit. Oh, Brutus ! Oh, my father ! —

Bru. What wouldst thou say, my son ?

Tit. Wilt thou forgive me ?

When I shall be no more, forget not my Tarquinia.

Bru. Leave her to my care.

Tit. Farewell, forever !

Bru. Forever !

[*Re-ascends the Tribunal.*]

Lictors, attend ! — conduct your pris'ner forth !

Val. Whither?

Bru. To death! — When you do reach the spot,
My hand shall wave your signal for the act,
Then let the trumpet's sound proclaim it done!

[*TITUS is conducted out by the Lictors. BRUTUS remains seated in a melancholy posture on the tribunal.*]

Poor youth! Thy pilgrimage is at an end!
A few sad steps have brought thee to the brink
Of that tremendous precipice, whose depth
No thought of man can fathom. Justice now
Demands her victim! A little moment,
And I am childless. — One effort, and 't is past! —

[*He rises and waves his hand, then drops into his seat, and shrouds his face with his toga. Three sounds of the trumpet are heard instantly. — BRUTUS starts up wildly, and looks out on the side by which TITUS departed, for an instant.*]

Justice is satisfied, and Rome is free!

[*Falls.*]

NOTE

The following scene in the Third Act was omitted after the first representation in compliance with the wishes of the many who thought it injurious to the general effect of the play. As there was some difference of opinion upon this point, the scene is here inserted as it originally stood. LUCRETIA is supposed to be surrounded by her relations — COLLATINUS and LUCRETIUS by her side — her hair dishevelled, wild in her attire, and all the other characters in attitudes of deep grief.

Luc. Bear witness, then, Lucretia's mind is guiltless —
Yet never can Lucretia smile again!

Lost to herself, her husband, and her child,
Lost to the world, her country, and her friends,
The arms of love can pillow her no more,
And the sweet smile of her dear innocent babe
Would but awaken her to deeper anguish!

And shall she live, bereft of all life's treasures,
The spectre of the past forever rising
To fright her into madness? Think not, countrymen,
Indignant virtue can survive pollution!

By her own hand a Roman wife can fall. [*Stabs herself.*]

'T is to the heart! Tarquin, the blow was thine! [*Falls.*]

Col. Beloved, unhappy wife! What hast thou done?

Luc. A deed of glory. Now, my husband, now —
With transport can I press thee to my bosom.
Father and kinsmen, ye can own me now !
My pure soul springs from its detested prison !
Virtue exults ! The gods applaud my daring !
And to our dear, loved babe, I can bequeath
A mother's noblest gift — a spotless name !

[*Dies.*

Luc. Staff of my age ! Gone, gone, forever gone !
A wretched father's last and only joy !
Come, death, strike here ! Your shaft were welcome now !
Snatch me from earth to my poor, lost, loved child !

Col. My wife ! my wife ! Dear, dear, wronged, murdered
wife !

Let me be rooted here in endless sorrow —
Who, who shall dare to mourn her loss like me ?

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. I dare, — and so dare every honest Roman.

The scene then proceeds as printed in the preceding pages.



A BLOT IN THE 'SCUTCHEON

BY

ROBERT BROWNING

ROBERT BROWNING was born in London, May 7, 1812. His father was a clerk in the Bank of England, had a taste for literature, and encouraged it in his son, to whom he gave a liberal education by private tutors and the means of travel. Robert's first published book, "Pauline," a poem, appeared anonymously in 1813. Years afterward Dante Rossetti found a copy in the British Museum, suspected it to be Browning's work, and wrote to ask him if it were not his. So strong was the poet's individuality even in his youth. His drama of "Paracelsus" appeared in 1835; and in the same year Macready, the actor, made Browning's acquaintance, conceived a strong liking for him, and asked him for a play. Accordingly, "Strafford" was produced, and was put upon the stage at Covent Garden, May 1, 1837. Macready and Helen Faucit had the principal parts, and the piece was well received. Browning then wrote the plays "King Victor and King Charles" and "The Return of the Druses," but they were not acted, and the masque entitled "Pippa Passes." The masterpiece among his dramas, "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon," is said to have been written in five days. It was presented at Drury Lane in February, 1843, with Mr. Phelps and Helen Faucit in the principal parts, and was triumphantly successful, in spite of the fact that Macready, who had had a misunderstanding with Browning, appeared to be rather desirous to have it fail. Lawrence Barrett produced it in Washington, in 1885, taking the part of Thorold. Browning's next play was "Colombe's Birthday," which was published in 1844, but was not put upon the stage in London till 1852. It was played at the Howard Athenæum, Boston, Mass., in 1854. "Luria" and "A Soul's Tragedy" were published in 1846. In that year he married Elizabeth Barrett, and they took up their residence in Florence, where they spent most of their time until her death in 1861. He died in Venice, December 12, 1889, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MILDRED TRESHAM.

GUENDOLEN TRESHAM.

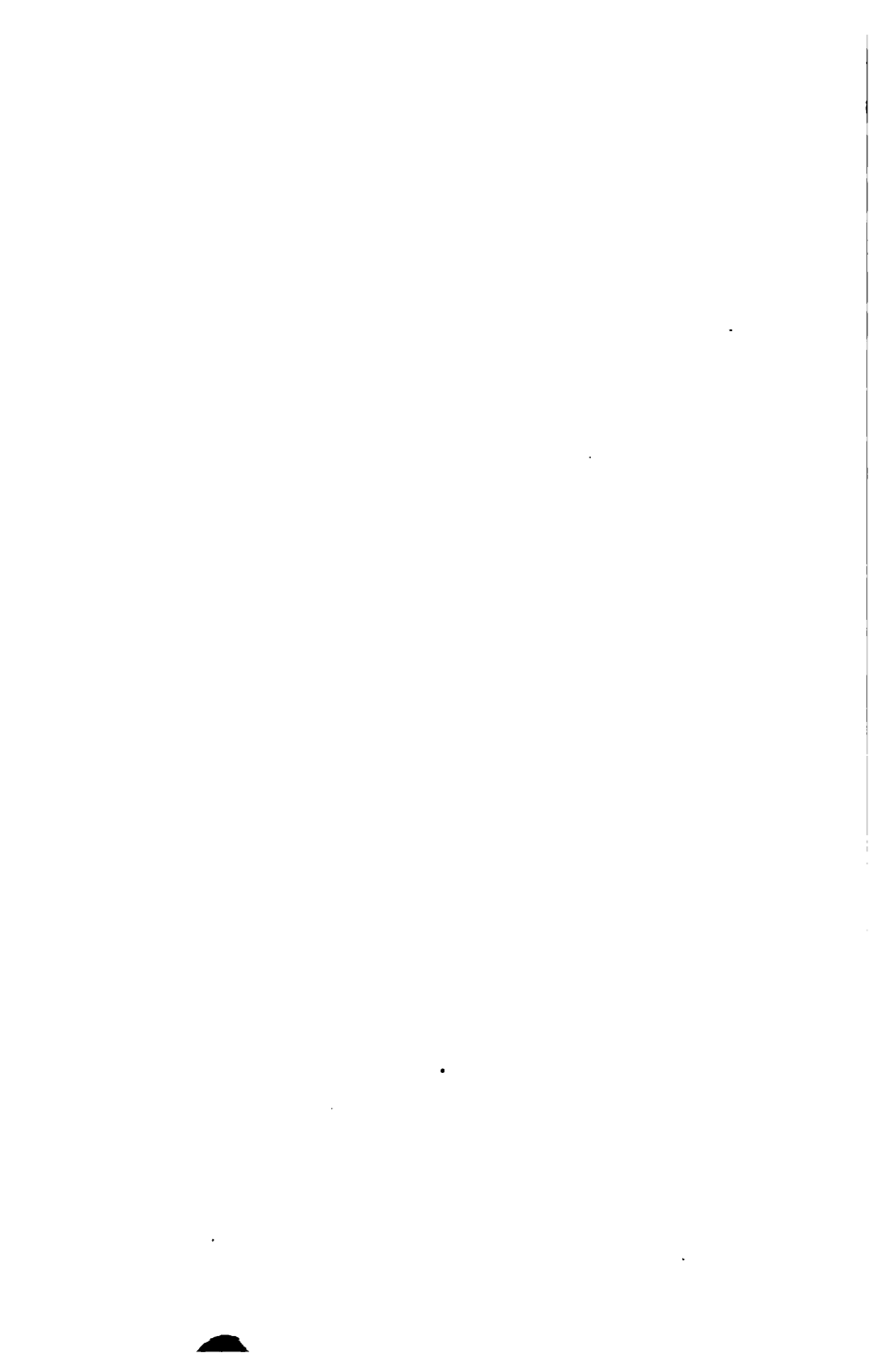
THOROLD, Earl Tresham.

AUSTIN TRESHAM.

HENRY, Earl Mertoun.

GERARD, and other Retainers of Lord Tresham.

TIME, 17—.



A BLOT IN THE 'SCUTCHEON

ACT I

SCENE I.—THE INTERIOR OF A LODGE IN LORD TRESHAM'S PARK. MANY RETAINERS CROWDED AT THE WINDOW, SUPPOSED TO COMMAND A VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE TO HIS MANSION. GERARD, THE WARRENER, HIS BACK TO A TABLE ON WHICH ARE FLAGONS, ETC.

FIRST RET. Ay, do ! push, friends, and then you'll push down me !—

What for? Does any hear a runner's foot
Or a steed's trample or a coach-wheel's cry?
Is the Earl come or his least poursuivant?
But there's no breeding in a man of you
Save Gerard yonder : here's a half-place yet,
Old Gerard !

Ger. Save your courtesies, my friend.
Here is my place.

Second Ret. Now, Gerard, out with it !
What makes you sullen, this of all the days
I' the year? To-day that young, rich, bountiful,
Handsome Earl Mertoun, whom alone they match
With our Lord Tresham through the country-side,
Is coming here in utmost bravery
To ask our master's sister's hand?

Ger. What then?

Second Ret. What then? Why, you, she speaks to, if she meets

Your worship, smiles on as you hold apart
The boughs to let her through her forest walks,
You, always favourite for your no-deserts,
You've heard these three days how Earl Mertoun sues
To lay his heart and house and broad lands too
At Lady Mildred's feet ; and while we squeeze
Ourselves into a mousehole lest we miss
One congee of the least page in his train,
You sit o' one side — "There's the Earl," say I —
"What then?" say you !

Third Ret. I'll wager he has let
Both swans he tamed for Lady Mildred swim
Over the falls and gain the river !

Ger. Ralph,
Is not to-morrow my inspecting-day
For you and for your hawks ?

Fourth Ret. Let Gerard be !
He's coarse-grained, like his carved black cross-bow stock,
Ha ! look now, while we squabble with him, look !
Well done, now — is not this beginning, now,
To purpose ?

First Ret. Our retainers look as fine —
That's comfort. Lord, how Richard holds himself
With his white staff ! Will not a knave behind
Prick him upright ?

Fourth Ret. He's only bowing, fool !
The Earl's man bent us lower by this much.

First Ret. That's comfort. Here's a very cavalcade !

Third Ret. I don't see wherefore Richard, and his troop
Of silk and silver varlets there, should find
Their perfumed selves so indispensable
On high days, holidays ! Would it so disgrace
Our family if I, for instance, stood —
In my right hand a cast of Swedish hawks,
A leash of greyhounds in my left ? —

Ger. With Hugh
The logman for supporter, in his right
The bill-hook, in his left the brushwood-shears !

Third Ret. Out on you, crab ! What next, what next ? The
Earl !

First Ret. Oh ! Walter, groom, our horses, do they match
The Earl's ? Alas, that first pair of the six —
They paw the ground — Ah, Walter ! and that brute
Just on his haunches by the wheel !

Sixth Ret. Ay — Ay !
You, Philip, are a special hand, I hear,
At soups and sauces : what's a horse to you ?
D' ye mark that beast they've slid into the midst
So cunningly ? — then, Philip, mark this further :
No leg has he to stand on !

First Ret. No ? That's comfort.

Second Ret. Peace, cook ! The Earl descends. — Well,
Gerard, see
The Earl at least ! Come, there's a proper man,
I hope ! Why, Ralph, no falcon, Pole or Swede,

Has got a starrier eye.

Third Ret. His eyes are blue —

But leave my hawks alone !

Fourth Ret. So young, and yet

So tall and shapely !

Fifth Ret. Here's Lord Tresham's self !

There now — there's what a nobleman should be !

He's older, graver, loftier, he's more like

A House's head !

Second Ret. But you'd not have a boy —

And what's the Earl beside? — possess too soon

That stateliness?

First Ret. Our master takes his hand —

Richard and his white staff are on the move —

Back fall our people — tsh ! — there's Timothy

Sure to get tangled in his ribbon-ties —

And Peter's cursed rosette's a-coming off ! —

At last I see our lord's back and his friend's —

And the whole beautiful bright company

Close round them — in they go ! [*Jumping down from the window-bench, and making for the table and its jugs.*]

Good health, long life,

Great joy to our Lord Tresham and his House !

Sixth Ret. My father drove his father first to court,

After his marriage-day — ay, did he !

Second Ret. God bless

Lord Tresham, Lady Mildred, and the Earl !

Here, Gerard, reach your beaker !

Ger. Drink, my boys !

Don't mind me — all's not right about me — drink !

Second Ret. [*Aside.*] He's vexed now, that he let the show escape !

[*To Ger.*] Remember that the Earl returns this way.

Ger. That way?

Second Ret. Just so.

Ger. Then my way's here. [*Goes.*

Second Ret. Old Gerard

Will die soon — mind, I said it ! He was used

To care about the pitifullest thing

That touched the House's honour, not an eye

But his could see wherein : and on a cause

Of scarce a quarter this importance, Gerard

Fairly had fretted flesh and bone away

In cares that this was right, nor that was wrong,

Such point decorous, and such square by rule —

He knew such niceties, no herald more ;
And now — you see his humour : die he will !

Second Ret. God help him ! Who's for the great servants'
hall

To hear what's going on inside ? They'd follow
Lord Tresham into the saloon.

Third Ret.

I ! —

Fourth Ret.

I ! —

Leave Frank alone for catching at the door
Some hint of how the parley goes inside !
Prosperity to the great House once more !
Here's the last drop !

First Ret.

Have at you ! Boys, hurrah !

SCENE II.—A SALOON IN THE MANSION

Enter LORD TRESHAM, LORD MERTOUN, AUSTIN, *and* GUENDOLEN.

Tres. I welcome you, Lord Mertoun, yet once more,
To this ancestral roof of mine. Your name —
Noble among the noblest in itself,
Yet taking in your person, fame avers,
New price and lustre — as that gem you wear,
Transmitted from a hundred knightly breasts,
Fresh chased and set and fixed by its last lord,
Seems to rekindle at the core — your name
Would win you welcome !

Mer.

Thanks !

Tres.

But add to that,

The worthiness and grace and dignity
Of your proposal for uniting both
Our Houses even closer than respect
Unites them now — add these, and you must grant
One favour more, nor that the least, — to think
The welcome I should give ; — 't is given ! My lord,
My only brother, Austin — he's the king's.
Our cousin, Lady Guendolen — betrothed
To Austin : all are yours.

Mer.

I thank you — less

For the express commendings which your seal,
And only that, authenticates — forbids
My putting from me — to my heart I take
Your praise — but praise less claims my gratitude,
Than the indulgent insight it implies
Of what must needs be uppermost with one

Who comes, like me, with the bare leave to ask,
In weighed and measured unimpassioned words,
A gift, which, if as calmly 't is denied,
He must withdraw, content upon his cheek,
Despair within his soul. That I dare ask
Firmly, near boldly, near with confidence,
That gift, I have to thank you. Yes, Lord Tresham,
I love your sister — as you'd have one love
That lady — oh ! more, more I love her ! Wealth,
Rank, all the world thinks me, they're yours, you know,
To hold or part with, at your choice — but grant
My true self, me without a rood of land,
A piece of gold, a name of yesterday,
Grant me that lady, and you — Death or life ?

Guen. [*Apart to Aus.*] Why, this is loving, Austin !

Aus. He's so young !

Guen. Young ? Old enough, I think, to half surmise
He never had obtained an entrance here,
Were all this fear and trembling needed.

Aus. Hush !

He reddens.

Guen. Mark him, Austin ; that's true love !
Ours must begin again.

Tres. We'll sit, my lord.
Ever with best desert goes diffidence.
I may speak plainly nor be misconceived.
That I am wholly satisfied with you
On this occasion, when a falcon's eye
Were dull compared with mine to search out faults,
Is somewhat. Mildred's hand is hers to give
Or to refuse.

Mer. But you, you grant my suit ?
I have your word if hers ?

Tres. My best of words
If hers encourage you. I trust it will.
Have you seen Lady Mildred, by the way ?

Mer. I — I — our two demesnes, remember, touch ;
I have been used to wander carelessly
After my stricken game : the heron roused
Deep in my woods, has trailed its broken wing
Thro' thicks and glades a mile in yours, — or else
Some eyass ill-reclaimed has taken flight
And lured me after her from tree to tree,
I marked not whither. I have come upon
The lady's wondrous beauty unaware,

And — and then — I have seen her.

Guen. [*Aside to AUS.*] Note that mode
Of faltering out that, when a lady passed,
He, having eyes, did see her! You had said —
“On such a day I scanned her, head to foot;
Observed a red, where red should not have been,
Outside her elbow; but was pleased enough
Upon the whole.” Let such irreverent talk
Be lessened for the future!

Tres. What's to say
May be said briefly. She has never known
A mother's care; I stand for father too.
Her beauty is not strange to you, it seems —
You can not know the good and tender heart,
Its girl's trust and its woman's constancy,
How pure yet passionate, how calm yet kind,
How grave yet joyous, how reserved yet free
As light where friends are — how imbued with lore
The world most prizes, yet the simplest, yet
The — one might know I talked of Mildred — thus
We brothers talk!

Mer. I thank you.

Tres. In a word,
Control 's not for this lady; but her wish
To please me outstrips in its subtlety
My power of being pleased: herself creates
The want she means to satisfy. My heart
Prefers your suit to her as 't were its own.
Can I say more?

Mer. No more — thanks, thanks — no more!

Tres. This matter then discussed —

Mer. We'll waste no breath
On aught less precious. I'm beneath the roof
Which holds her: while I thought of that, my speech
To you would wander — as it must not do,
Since as you favour me I stand or fall.

I pray you suffer that I take my leave!

Tres. With less regret 't is suffered, that again
We meet, I hope, so shortly.

Mer. We? again? —
Ah! yes, forgive me — when shall — you will crown
Your goodness by forthwith apprising me
When — if — the lady will appoint a day
For me to wait on you — and her.

Tres. So soon

As I am made acquainted with her thoughts
On your proposal — howsoe'er they lean —
A messenger shall bring you the result.

Mer. You can not bind me more to you, my lord.
Farewell till we renew — I trust, renew
A converse ne'er to disunite again.

Tres. So may it prove !

Mer. You, lady, you, sir, take
My humble salutation !

Guen. and Aus. Thanks !

Tres. Within there !

[*Servants enter. TRESHAM conducts MERTOUN to the door. Mean-
time AUSTIN remarks :*

Well,

Here I have an advantage of the Earl,
Confess now ! I'd not think that all was safe
Because my lady's brother stood my friend !
Why, he makes sure of her — "do you say, yes —
She'll not say no," — what comes it to beside?
I should have prayed the brother, "speak this speech,
For Heaven's sake urge this on her — put in this —
Forget not, as you'd save me, t'other thing, —
Then set down what she says, and how she looks,
And if she smiles, and " — in an under breath —
"Only let her accept me, and do you
And all the world refuse me, if you dare !"

Guen. That way you'd take, friend Austin? What a shame
I was your cousin, tamely from the first
Your bride, and all this fervour's run to waste !
Do you know you speak sensibly to-day?
The Earl's a fool.

Aus. Here's Thorold. Tell him so !

Tres. [*Returning.*] Now, voices, voices ! 'St ! the lady's
first !

How seems he? — seems he not — come, faith give fraud
The mercy-stroke whenever they engage !
Down with fraud, up with faith ! How seems the Earl?
A name ! a blazon ! if you knew their worth,
As you will never ! come — the Earl ?

Guen. He's young.

Tres. What's she ? an infant save in heart and brain.
Young ! Mildred is fourteen, remark ! And you —
Austin, how old is she ?

Guen. There's tact for you !
I meant that being young was good excuse

If one should tax him —

Tres. Well?

Guen. With lacking wit.

Tres. He lacked wit? Where might he lack wit, so please you?

Guen. In standing straighter than the steward's rod
And making you the tiresomest harangue,
Instead of slipping over to my side
And softly whispering in my ear, "Sweet lady,
Your cousin there will do me detriment
He little dreams of: he's absorbed, I see,
In my old name and fame — be sure he'll leave
My Mildred when his best account of me
Is ended, in full confidence I wear
My grandsire's periwig down either cheek.
I'm lost unless your gentleness vouchsafes —"

Tres. "To give a best of best accounts, yourself,
Of me and my demerits." You are right!
He should have said what now I say for him.
You golden creature, will you help us all?
Here's Austin means to vouch for much, but you —
You are — what Austin only knows! Come up,
All three of us; she's in the library
No doubt, for the day's wearing fast. Precede!

Guen. Austin, how we must —!

Tres. Must what? Must speak truth,
Malignant tongue! Detect one fault in him!
I challenge you!

Guen. Witchcraft's a fault in him,
For you're bewitched.

Tres. What's urgent we obtain
Is, that she soon receive him — say, to-morrow —
Next day at furthest.

Guen. Ne'er instruct me!

Tres. Come! —
He's out of your good graces, since forsooth,
He stood not as he'd carry us by storm
With his perfections! You're for the composed,
Manly, assured, becoming confidence! —
Get her to say, "to-morrow," and I'll give you —
I'll give you black Urganda, to be spoiled
With petting and snail-paces. Will you? Come!

SCENE III.—MILDRED'S CHAMBER. A PAINTED WINDOW OVER-LOOKS THE PARK. MILDRED AND GUENDOLEN

Guen. Now, Mildred, spare those pains. I have not left
Our talkers in the library, and climbed
The wearisome ascent to this your bower
In company with you, — I have not dared —
Nay, worked such prodigies as sparing you
Lord Mertoun's pedigree before the flood,
Which Thorold seemed in very act to tell —
Or bringing Austin to pluck up that most
Firm-rooted heresy — your suitor's eyes,
He would maintain, were gray instead of blue —
I think I brought him to contrition! — Well,
I have not done such things — all to deserve
A minute's quiet cousin's talk with you —
To be dismissed so coolly!

Mil. Guendolen!

What have I done? what could suggest —

Guen.

There, there!

Do I not comprehend you'd be alone
To throw those testimonies in a heap,
Thorold's enlargings, Austin's brevities,
With that poor silly, heartless Guendolen's
Ill-timed, misplaced, attempted smartnesses —
And sift their sense out? now, I come, to spare you
Nearly a whole night's labour. Ask and have!
Demand, be answered! Lack I ears and eyes?
Am I perplexed which side of the rock-table
The Conqueror dined on when he landed first
Lord Mertoun's ancestor was bidden take —
The bow-hand or the arrow-hand's great meed?
Mildred, the Earl has soft blue eyes!

Mil.

My brother —

Did he — you said that he received him well?

Guen. If I said only 'well' I said not much —
Oh! stay — which brother?

Mil.

Thorold! who — who else?

Guen. Thorold — a secret — is too proud by half —
Nay, hear me out — with us he's even gentler
Than we are with our birds. Of this great House
The least retainer that e'er caught his glance
Would die for him, real dying — no mere talk;
And in the world, the court, if men would cite
The perfect spirit of honour, Thorold's name

Rises of its clear nature to their lips.
 But he should take men's homage, trust in it,
 And care no more about what drew it down.
 He has desert, and that, acknowledgment;
 Is he content?

Mil. You wrong him, Guendolen.

Guen. He's proud, confess; so proud with brooding o'er
 The light of his interminable line,
 An ancestry with men all paladins,
 And women all —

Mil. Dear Guendolen, 't is late!
 When yonder purple pane the climbing moon
 Pierces, I know 't is midnight.

Guen. Well, that Thorold
 Should rise up from such musings, and receive
 One come audaciously to graft himself
 Into this peerless stock, yet find no flaw,
 No slightest spot in such an one —

Mil. Who finds
 A spot in Mertoun?

Guen. Not your brother; therefore
 Not the whole world.

Mil. I am weary, Guendolen. —
 Bear with me!

Guen. I am foolish.

Mil. Oh! no, kind —
 But I would rest.

Guen. Good night and rest to you!
 I said how gracefully his mantle lay
 Beneath the rings of his light hair?

Mil. Brown hair.

Guen. Brown? why it *is* brown — how could you know that?

Mil. How? did not you — Oh? Austin 't was, declared
 His hair was light, not brown — my head! — and look,
 The moonbeam purpling the dark chamber! Sweet,
 Good night!

Guen. Forgive me — sleep the soundlier for me!

[*Going, she turns suddenly.*
 Mildred!

Perdition! all's discovered! Thorold finds —
 That the Earl's greatest of all grandmothers
 Was grander daughter still — to that fair dame
 Whose garter slipped down at the famous dance!

Mil. Is she — can she be really gone at last?
 My heart! I shall not reach the window. Needs

[*Goes.*

Must I have sinned much, so to suffer !

[*She lifts the small lamp which is suspended before the Virgin's image in the window and places it by the purple pane.*]

There !

[*She returns to the seat in front.*]

Mildred and Mertoun ! Mildred, with consent

Of all the world and Thorold, Mertoun's bride !

Too late ! 'T is sweet to think of, sweeter still

To hope for, that this blessed end soothes up

The curse of the beginning ; but I know

It comes too late : 't will sweetest be of all

To dream my soul away and die upon. [*A noise without.*]

The voice ! Oh ! why glided sin the snake

Into the paradise Heaven meant us both ?

[*The window opens softly. A low voice sings.*]

There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest ;
And her noble heart's the noblest, yes, and her sure faith's the surest ;
And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth on depth of lustre
Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than the wild-grape cluster,
Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's rose-misted marble :
Then her voice's music — call it the well's bubbling, the bird's warble !

[*A figure wrapped in a mantle appears at the window.*]

And this woman says, " My days were sunless and my nights were moonless,
Parched the pleasant April herbage, and the lark's heart's outbreak tuneless,
If you loved me not ! " And I who — ah, for words of flame ! — adore her,
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate palpably before her —

[*He enters, approaches the seat, and bends over her.*]

I may enter at her portal soon, as now her lattice takes me,
And by noontide as by midnight make her mine, as hers she makes me !

[*The EARL throws off his slouched hat and long cloak.*]

My very heart sings, so I sing, beloved !

Mil. Sit, Henry — do not take my hand !

Mer.

'T is mine.

The meeting that appalled us both so much
Is ended.

Mil. What begins now ?

Mer.

Happiness

Such as the world contains not.

Mil.

That is it.

Our happiness would, as you say, exceed
The whole world's best of blisses : we — do we
Deserve that ? Utter to your soul, what mine
Long since, beloved, has grown used to hear,
Like a death-knell, so much regarded once,
And so familiar now ; this will not be !

Mer. O Mildred, have I met your brother's face,
Compelled myself — if not to speak untruth,
Yet to disguise, to shun, to put aside
The truth, as — what had e'er prevailed on me
Save you, to venture? Have I gained at last
Your brother, the one scarer of your dreams,
And waking thoughts' sole apprehension too?
Does a new life, like a young sunrise, break
On the strange unrest of our night, confused
With rain and stormy flaw — and will you see
No dripping blossoms, no fire-tinted drops
On each live spray, no vapour steaming up,
And no expressless glory in the east?
When I am by you, to be ever by you,
When I have won you and may worship you,
O Mildred, can you say "this will not be?"

Mil. Sin has surprised us; so will punishment.

Mer. No — me alone, who sinned alone!

Mil.

The night

You likened our past life to — was it storm
Throughout to you then, Henry?

Mer.

Of your life

I spoke — what am I, what my life, to waste
A thought about when you are by me? — you
It was, I said my folly called the storm
And pulled the night upon. 'T was day with me —
Perpetual dawn with me.

Mil.

Come what come will,

You have been happy: take my hand!

Mer. [After a pause].

How good

Your brother is! I figured him a cold —
Shall I say, haughty man?

Mil.

They told me all.

I know all.

Mer.

It will soon be over.

Mil.

Over?

Oh! what is over? what must I live through
And say, "'t is over"? Is our meeting over?
Have I received in presence of them all
The partner of my guilty love — with brow
Trying to seem a maiden's brow — with lips
Which make believe that when they strive to form
Replies to you and tremble as they strive,
It is the nearest ever they approached
A stranger's — Henry, yours that stranger's — lip —

With cheek that looks a virgin's, and that is —
Ah ! God, some prodigy of thine will stop
This planned piece of deliberate wickedness
In its birth even ! some fierce leprous spot
Will mar the brow's dissimulating ! I
Shall murmur no smooth speeches got by heart,
But, frenzied, pour forth all our woeful story,
The love, the shame, and the despair — with them
Round me aghast as men round some cursed fount
That should spirt water, and spouts blood. I'll not —
Henry, you do not wish that I should draw
This vengeance down ? I'll not affect a grace
That's gone from me — gone once, and gone forever !

Mer. Mildred, my honour is your own. I'll share
Disgrace I cannot suffer by myself.

A word informs your brother I retract
This morning's offer ; time will yet bring forth
Some better way of saving both of us.

Mil. I'll meet their faces, Henry !

Mer. When ? to-morrow !
Get done with it !

Mil. O Henry, not to-morrow !
Next day ! I never shall prepare my words
And looks and gestures sooner. — How you must
Despise me !

Mer. Mildred, break it if you choose,
A heart the love of you uplifted — still
Uplifts, through this protracted agony,
To heaven ! but Mildred, answer me, — first pace
The chamber with me — once again — now, say
Calmly the part, the — what it is of me
You see contempt — for you did say contempt —
Contempt for you in ! I would pluck it off
And cast it from me ! — but no — no, you'll not
Repeat that ? — will you, Mildred, repeat that ?

Mil. Dear Henry !

Mer. I was scarce a boy — e'en now
What am I more ? And you were infantine
When first I met you ; why, your hair fell loose
On either side ! My fool's-cheek reddens now
Only in the recalling how it burned
That morn to see the shape of many a dream —
You know we boys are prodigal of charms
To her we dream of — I had heard of one,
Had dreamed of her, and I was close to her,

Might speak to her, might live and die her own—
 Who knew? I spoke. O Mildred, feel you not
 That now, while I remember every glance
 Of yours, each word of yours, with power to test
 And weigh them in the diamond scales of pride,
 Resolved the treasure of a first and last
 Heart's love shall have been bartered as its worth —
 That now I think upon your purity
 And utter ignorance of guilt — your own
 Or other's guilt — the girlish undisguised
 Delight at a strange novel prize, — I talk
 A silly language, but interpret, you! —
 If I, with fancy at its full, and reason
 Scarce in its germ, enjoined you secrecy,
 If you had pity on my passion, pity
 On my protested sickness of the soul
 To sit beside you, hear you breathe, and watch
 Your eyelids and the eyes beneath — if you
 Accorded gifts and knew not they were gifts —
 If I grew mad at last with enterprise
 And must behold my beauty in her bower
 Or perish — I was ignorant of even
 My own desires — what then were you? — if sorrow —
 Sin — if the end came — must I now renounce
 My reason, blind myself to light, say truth
 Is false and lie to God and my own soul?
 Contempt were all of this!

Mil. Do you believe —

Or, Henry, I'll not wrong you — you believe
 That I was ignorant. I scarce grieve o'er
 The past! We'll love on; you will love me still!

Mer. Oh! to love less what one has injured! Dove,
 Whose pinion I have rashly hurt, my breast —
 Shall my heart's warmth not nurse thee into strength?
 Flower I have crushed, shall I not care for thee?
 Bloom o'er my crest, my fight-mark and device!
 Mildred, I love you and you love me!

Mil. Go!

Be that your last word. I shall sleep to-night.

Mer. This is not our last meeting?

Mil. One night more.

Mer. And then — think, then!

Mil. Then, no sweet courtship days,
 No dawning consciousness of love for us,
 No strange and palpitating births of sense

From words and looks, no innocent fears and hopes,
Reserves and confidences : morning's over !

Mer. How else should love's perfected noontide follow?
All the dawn promised shall the day perform.

Mil. So may it be ! but —

You are cautious, love?

Are sure that unobserved you scaled the walls?

Mer. Oh ! trust me ! Then our final meeting's fixed ?
To-morrow night ?

Mil. Farewell ! Stay, Henry — wherefore ?
His foot is on the yew-tree bough ; the turf
Receives him : now the moonlight as he runs
Embraces him — but he must go — is gone.
Ah ! once again he turns — thanks, thanks my love !
He's gone. Oh ! I'll believe him every word !
I was so young, I loved him so, I had
No mother, God forgot me, and I fell.
There may be pardon yet ; all's doubt beyond.
Surely the bitterness of death is past !

ACT II

SCENE I.—THE LIBRARY

Enter LORD TRESHAM hastily.

THIS way ! In, Gerard, quick !
[*As GERARD enters, TRESHAM secures the door.*
Now speak ! or, wait —
I'll bid you speak directly. [Seats himself.

Now repeat

Firmly and circumstantially the tale
You just now told me ; it eludes me ; either
I did not listen, or the half is gone
Away from me. How long have you lived here ?
Here in my house, your father kept our woods
Before you ?

Ger. As his father did, my lord.
I have been eating, sixty years almost,
Your bread.

Tres. Yes, yes. You ever were of all
The servants in my father's house, I know,
The trusted one. You'll speak the truth.

- Ger.* I'll speak
God's truth. Night after night —
- Tres.* Since when?
- Ger.* At least
A month — each midnight has some man access
To Lady Mildred's chamber.
- Tres.* Tush, "access" —
No wide words like "access" to me!
- Ger.* He runs
Along the woodside, crosses to the south,
Takes the left tree that ends the avenue —
- Tres.* The last great yew-tree?
- Ger.* You might stand upon
The main boughs like a platform. Then he —
- Tres.* Quick!
- Ger.* Climbs up, and where they lessen at the top —
I cannot see distinctly, but he throws,
I think — for this I do not vouch — a line
That reaches to the lady's casement —
- Tres.* Which
He enters not! Gerard, some wretched fool
Dares pry into my sister's privacy!
When such are young, it seems a precious thing
To have approached, — to merely have approached,
Got sight of, the abode of her they set
Their frantic thoughts upon! He does not enter?
Gerard?
- Ger.* There is a lamp that's full i' the midst,
Under a red square in the painted glass
Of Lady Mildred's —
- Tres.* Leave that name out! Well?
That lamp?
- Ger.* Is moved at midnight higher up
To one pane — a small dark-blue pane; he waits
For that among the boughs: at sight of that,
I see him, plain as I see you, my lord,
Open the lady's casement, enter there —
- Tres.* And stay?
- Ger.* An hour, two hours.
- Tres.* And this you saw
Once? — twice? — quick!
- Ger.* Twenty times.
- Tres.* And what brings you
Under the yew-trees?
- Ger.* The first night I left

My range so far, to track the stranger stag
That broke the pale, I saw the man.

Tres. Yet sent

No cross-bow shaft through the marauder?

Ger. But

He came, my lord, the first time he was seen,
In a great moonlight, light as any day,
From Lady Mildred's chamber.

Tres. [*After a pause*]. You have no cause —
Who could have cause to do my sister wrong?

Ger. O my lord, only once — let me this once
Speak what is on my mind ! Since first I noted
All this, I've groaned as if a fiery net
Plucked me this way and that — fire, if I turned
To her, fire if I turned to you, and fire,
If down I flung myself and strove to die.
The lady could not have been seven years old
When I was trusted to conduct her safe
Through the deer-herd to stroke the snow-white fawn
I brought to eat bread from her tiny hand
Within a month. She ever had a smile
To greet me with — she — if it could undo
What's done to lop each limb from off this trunk —
All that is foolish talk, not fit for you —
I mean, I could not speak and bring her hurt
For Heaven's compelling. But when I was fixed
To hold my peace, each morsel of your food
Eaten beneath your roof, my birthplace too,
Choked me. I wish I had grown mad in doubts
What it behooved me do. This morn it seemed
Either I must confess to you, or die :
Now it is done, I seem the vilest worm
That crawls, to have betrayed my lady !

Tres. No —

No, Gerard !

Ger. Let me go !

Tres. A man, you say :

What man? Young? Not a vulgar hind? What dress?

Ger. A slouched hat and a large dark foreign cloak
Wraps his whole form ; even his face is hid ;
But I should judge him young : no hind, be sure !

Tres. Why?

Ger. He is ever armed : his sword projects
Beneath the cloak.

Tres. Gerard, — I will not say

No word, no breath of this !

Ger.

Thanks, thanks, my lord ! [*Goes.*]

TRESHAM paces the room. After a pause :

Oh ! thought 's absurd ! — as with some monstrous fact
Which, when ill thoughts beset us, seems to give
Merciful God that made the sun and stars,
The waters and the green delights of earth,
The lie ! I apprehend the monstrous fact —
Yet know the Maker of all worlds is good,
And yield my reason up, inadequate
To reconcile what yet I do behold —
Blasting my sense ! There 's cheerful day outside :
This is my library, and this the chair
My father used to sit in carelessly
After his soldier fashion, while I stood
Between his knees to question him ; and here
Gerard our gray retainer — as he says,
Fed with our food, from sire to son, an age —
Has told a story — I am to believe !
That Mildred — oh, no, no ! both tales are true,
Her pure cheek's story and the forester's !
Would she, or could she, err — much less, confound
All guilts of treachery, of craft, of — Heaven
Keep me within its hand ! — I will sit here
Until thought settle and I see my course.
Avert, O God, only this woe from me !

[*As he sinks his head between his arms on the table GUENDOLEN'S voice is heard at the door.*]

Lord Tresham ! [*She knocks.*] Is Lord Tresham there ?

[*TRESHAM, hastily turning, pulls down the first book above his head and opens it.*]

Tres.

Come in ! [*She enters.*]

Ha ! Guendolen — good morning.

Guen.

Nothing more ?

Tres. What should I say more ?

Guen.

Pleasant question ! more ?

This more. Did I besiege poor Mildred's brain
Last night till close on morning with "the Earl,"
"The Earl" — whose worth did I asseverate
Till I am very fain to hope that — Thorold,
What is all this ? You are not well !

Tres.

Who ? I ?

You laugh at me.

Guen.

Has what I'm fain to hope

Arrived then? Does that huge tome show some blot
In the Earl's 'scutcheon come no longer back
Than Arthur's time?

Tres. When left you Mildred's chamber?

Guen. Oh! late enough, I told you! The main thing
To ask is, how I left her chamber, — sure,
Content yourself, she'll grant this paragon
Of earls no such ungracious —

Tres. Send her here!

Guen. Thorold?

Tres. I mean — acquaint her, Guendolen, —
But mildly!

Guen. Mildly?

Tres. Ah! you guessed aright.
I am not well: there is no hiding it.
But tell her I would see her at her leisure —
That is, at once! here in the library!
The passage in that old Italian book
We hunted for so long is found, say, found —
And if I let it slip again — you see,
That she must come — and instantly!

Guen. I'll die
Piecemeal, record that, if there have not gloomed
Some blot i' the 'scutcheon!

Tres. Go! or, Guendolen,
Be you at call, — with Austin, if you choose, —
In the adjoining gallery! There, go! [*GUENDOLEN goes.*]
Another lesson to me! You might bid
A child disguise his heart's sore, and conduct
Some sly investigation point by point
With a smooth brow, as well as bid me catch
The inquisitorial cleverness some praise!
If you had told me yesterday, "There's one
You needs must circumvent and practise with,
Entrap by policies, if you would worm
The truth out; and that one is — Mildred!" There,
There — reasoning is thrown away on it!
Prove she's unchaste — why, you may after prove
That she's a poisoner, traitress, what you will!
Where I can comprehend nought, nought's to say.
Or do, or think? Force on me but the first
Abomination — then outpour all plagues,
And I shall ne'er make count of them!

Enter MILDRED.

Mil.

What book

Is it I wanted, Thorold? Guendolen
Thought you were pale; you are not pale. That book?
That's Latin surely.

Tres. Mildred, here's a line —
Don't lean on me: I'll English it for you —
"Love conquers all things." What love conquers them?
What love should you esteem — best love?

Mil. True love.

Tres. I mean, and should have said, whose love is best
Of all that love or that profess to love?

Mil. The list's so long: there's father's, mother's, husband's —

Tres. Mildred, I do believe a brother's love
For a sole sister must exceed them all.
For see now, only see! there's no alloy
Of earth that creeps into the perfect'st gold
Of other loves — no gratitude to claim;
You never gave her life, not even aught
That keeps life — never tended her, instructed,
Enriched her — so your love can claim no right
O'er her save pure love's claim: that's what I call
Freedom from earthliness. You'll never hope
To be such friends, for instance, she and you,
As when you hunted cowslips in the woods
Or played together in the meadow hay.
Oh! yes — with age, respect comes, and your worth
Is felt, there's growing sympathy of tastes,
There's ripened friendship, there's confirmed esteem: —
Much head these make against the new-comer!
The startling apparition, the strange youth —
Whom one half-hour's conversing with, or, say,
Mere gazing at, shall change — beyond all change
This Ovid ever sang about — your soul —
Her soul, that is, — the sister's soul! With her
'T was winter yesterday; now, all is warmth,
The green leaf's springing and the turtle's voice,
"Arise and come away!" Come whither? — far
Enough from the esteem, respect, and all
The brother's somewhat insignificant
Array of rights! All which he knows before,
Has calculated on so long ago!
I think such love — apart from yours and mine —
Contented with its little term of life,
Intending to retire betimes, aware
How soon the background must be place for it, —

I think, am sure, a brother's love exceeds
All the world's love in its unworldliness.

Mil. What is this for?

Tres. This, Mildred, is it for !
Or, no, I can not go to it so soon !
That's one of many points my haste left out —
Each day, each hour throws forth its silk-like film
Between the being tied to you by birth,
And you, until these slender threads compose
A web that shrouds her daily life of hopes
And fears and fancies, all her life, from yours :
So close you live and yet so far apart !
And must I rend this web, tear up, break down
The sweet and palpitating mystery
That makes her sacred? You, for you I mean,
Shall I speak, shall I not speak?

Mil. Speak !

Tres. I will.

Is there a story men could — any man
Could tell of you, you would conceal from me?
I'll never think there's falsehood on that lip.
Say "There is no such story men could tell,"
And I'll believe you, though I disbelieve
The world — the world of better men than I,
And women such as I suppose you. Speak !
[*After a pause.*] Not speak? Explain then ! Clear it up
then ! Move

Some of the miserable weight away
That presses lower than the grave ! Not speak?
Some of the dead weight, Mildred ! Ah, if I
Could bring myself to plainly make their charge
Against you ! Must I, Mildred ? Silent still ?
[*After a pause.*] Is there a gallant that has night by night
Admittance to your chamber ?

[*After a pause.*] Then, his name !
Till now, I only had a thought for you :
But now, — his name !

Mil. Thorold, do you devise
Fit expiation for my guilt, if fit
There be ? 'Tis nought to say that I'll endure
And bless you, — that my spirit yearns to purge
Her stains off in the fierce renewing fire :
But do not plunge me into other guilt !
Oh, guilt enough ! I can not tell his name.

Tres. Then judge yourself ! How should I act ? Pronounce !

Mil. O Thorold, you must never tempt me thus !
 To die here in this chamber by that sword
 Would seem like punishment : so should I glide,
 Like an arch-cheat, into extremest bliss !
 'T were easily arranged for me : but you —
 What would become of you ?

Tres. And what will now
 Become of me ? I'll hide your shame and mine
 From every eye ; the dead must heave their hearts
 Under the marble of our chapel-floor ;
 They can not rise and blast you. You may wed
 Your paramour above our mother's tomb ;
 Our mother can not move from 'neath your foot.
 We too will somehow wear this one day out :
 But with to-morrow hastens here — the Earl !
 The youth without suspicion that faces come
 From heaven, and hearts from — whence proceed such hearts ?
 I have dispatched last night at your command
 A missive bidding him present himself
 To-morrow — here — thus much is said ; the rest
 Is understood as if 't were written down —
 "His suit finds favour in your eyes" : — now dictate
 This morning's letter that shall countermand
 Last night's — do dictate that !

Mil. But Thorold — if
 I will receive him as I said ?

Tres. The Earl ?

Mil. I will receive him.

Tres. [*Starting up*]. Ho there ! Guendolen !

GUENDOLEN and AUSTIN enter.

And, Austin, you are welcome, too ! Look there !
 The woman there !

Aus. and Guen. How ? Mildred ?

Tres. Mildred once !

Now the receiver night by night, when sleep
 Blesses the inmates of her father's house —
 I say, the soft sly wanton that receives
 Her guilt's accomplice 'neath this roof which holds
 You, Guendolen, you, Austin, and has held
 A thousand Treshams — never one like her !
 No lighter of the signal-lamp her quick
 Foul breath near quenches in hot eagerness
 To mix with breath as foul ! no loosener
 O' the lattice, practised in the stealthy tread,

The low voice, and the noiseless come-and-go !
Not one composer of the bacchant's mien
Into — what you thought Mildred's, in a word !
Know her !

Guen. O Mildred, look to me, at least !
Thorold — she's dead, I'd say, but that she stands
Rigid as stone and whiter !

Tres. You have heard —

Guen. Too much ! You must proceed no further.

Mil.

Yes —

Proceed ! All's truth. Go from me !

Tres.

All is truth,

She tells you ! Well, you know, or ought to know,
All this I would forgive in her. I'd con
Each precept the harsh world enjoins, I'd take
Our ancestors' stern verdicts one by one,
I'd bind myself before them to exact
The prescribed vengeance — and one word of hers,
The sight of her, the bare least memory
Of Mildred, my one sister, my heart's pride
Above all prides, my all in all so long,
Would scatter every trace of my resolve.
What were it silently to waste away
And see her waste away from this day forth,
Two scathed things with leisure to repent,
And grow acquainted with the grave, and die
Tired out if not at peace, and be forgotten ?
It were not so impossible to bear.
But this — that, fresh from last night's pledge renewed
Of love with the successful gallant there,
She calmly bids me help her to entice,
Inveigle an unconscious, trusting youth
Who thinks her all that's chaste and good and pure —
Invites me to betray him — who so fit
As honour's self to cover shame's arch-deed ? —
That she'll receive Lord Mertoun — her own phrase —
This, who could bear ? Why, you have heard of thieves,
Stabbers, the earth's disgrace, who yet have laughed,
"Talk not to me of torture — I'll betray
No comrade I've pledged faith to !" — you have heard
Of wretched women — all but Mildreds — tied
By wild illicit ties to losels vile
You'd tempt them to forsake ; and they'll reply
"Gold, friends, repute, I left for him, I find
In him, why should I leave him then for gold,

Repute or friends?" — and you have felt your heart
Respond to such poor outcasts of the world
As to so many friends; bad as you please,
You've felt they were God's men and women still,
So not to be disowned by you. But she
That stands there, calmly gives her lover up
As means to wed the Earl that she may hide
Their intercourse the surelier; and, for this,
I curse her to her face before you all.
Shame hunt her from the earth! Then Heaven do right
To both! It hears me now — shall judge her then!

[*As MILDRED faints and falls, TRESHAM rushes out.*]

Aus. Stay, Tresham, we'll accompany you!

Guen.

We?

What, and leave Mildred? We? Why, where's my place
But by her side, and where yours but by mine?
Mildred — one word! Only look at me, then!

Aus. No, Guendolen! I echo Thorold's voice.
She is unworthy to behold —

Guen.

Us two?

If you spoke on reflection, and if I
Approved your speech — if you — to put the thing
At lowest — you the soldier, bound to make
The king's cause yours and fight for it, and throw
Regard to others of its right or wrong —
If with a death-white woman you can help,
Let alone sister, let alone a Mildred,
You left her — or if I, her cousin, friend
This morning, playfellow but yesterday,
Who said, or thought at least a thousand times,
"I'd serve you if I could," should now face round
And say, "Ah! that's to only signify
I'd serve you while you're fit to serve yourself —
So long as fifty eyes await the turn
Of yours to forestall its yet half-formed wish,
I'll proffer my assistance you'll not need —
When every tongue is praising you, I'll join
The praisers' chorus — when you're hemmed about
With lives between you and detraction — lives
To be laid down if a rude voice, rash eye,
Rough hand should violate the sacred ring
Their worship throws about you, — then indeed,
Who'll stand up for you stout as I?" If so
We said, and so we did, — not Mildred there
Would be unworthy to behold us both,

But we should be unworthy, both of us,
To be beheld by — by — your meanest dog,
Which, if that sword were broken in your face
Before a crowd, that badge torn off your breast,
And you cast out with hooting and contempt,
Would push his way through all the hooters, gain
Your side, go off with you and all your shame
To the next ditch you choose to die in ! Austin,
Do you love me ? Here's Austin, Mildred, — here's
Your brother says that he does not believe half —
No, nor half that — of all he heard ! He says,
Look up and take his hand !

Aus.

Look up and take

My hand, dear Mildred !

Mil.

I — I was so young !

Beside, I loved him, Thorold — and I had
No mother ; God forgot me : so I fell.

Guen. Mildred !

Mil.

Require no further ! Did I dream

That I could palliate what is done ? All's true.

Now punish me ! A woman takes my hand ?

Let go my hand ! You do not know, I see.

I thought that Thorold told you.

Guen.

What is this ?

Where start you to ?

Mil.

O Austin, loosen me !

You heard the whole of it — your eyes were worse,

In their surprise, than Thorold's ! Oh ! unless

You stay to execute his sentence, loose

My hand ! Has Thorold gone, and are you here ?

Guen. Here, Mildred, we two friends of yours will wait

Your bidding ; be you silent, sleep or muse !

Only, when you shall want your bidding done,

How can we do it if we are not by ?

Here's Austin waiting patiently your will.

One spirit to command, and one to love

And to believe in it and do its best,

Poor as that is, to help it — why, the world

Has been won many a time, its length and breadth,

By just such a beginning !

Mil.

I believe

If once I threw my arms about your neck

And sunk my head upon your breast, that I

Should weep again.

Guen.

Let go her hand now, Austin.

Wait for me. Pace the gallery and think
On the world's seemings and realities
Until I call you.

[AUSTIN goes.]

Mil. No — I can not weep.
No more tears from this brain — no sleep — no tears !
O Guendolen, I love you !

Guen. Yes : and "love"
Is a short word that says so very much !
It says that you confide in me.

Mil. Confide !
Guen. Your lover's name, then ! I've so much to learn,
Ere I can work in your behalf !

Mil. My friend,
You know I can not tell his name.

Guen. At least
He is your lover ? and you love him too ?

Mil. Ah ! do you ask me that ? — but I am fallen
So low !

Guen. You love him still, then ?

Mil. My sole prop
Against the guilt that crushes me ! I say,
Each night ere I lie down, "I was so young —
I had no mother, and I loved him so !"
And then God seems indulgent, and I dare
Trust him my soul in sleep.

Guen. How could you let us
E'en talk to you about Lord Mertoun then ?

Mil. There is a cloud around me.

Guen. But you said
You would receive his suit in spite of this ?

Mil. I say there is a cloud —

Guen. No cloud to me !
Lord Mertoun and your lover are the same !

Mil. What maddest fancy —

Guen. [Calling aloud.] Austin ! — spare your pains —
When I have got a truth that truth I keep —

Mil. By all your love, sweet Guendolen, forbear !
Have I confided in you —

Guen. Just for this !
Austin ! — Oh ! not to guess it at the first !
But I did guess it — that is, I divined,
Felt by an instinct how it was : why else
Should I pronounce you free from all that heap
Of sins which had been irredeemable ?
I felt they were not yours — what other way

Than this, not yours? The secret 's wholly mine!

Mil. If you would see me die before his face—

Guen. I'd hold my peace! And if the Earl returns
To-night?

Mil. Ah! Heaven, he 's lost!

Guen. I thought so. Austin!

[*Enter AUSTIN.*]

Oh! where have you been hiding?

Aus. Thorold's gone,

I know not how, across the meadow-land.

I watched him till I lost him in the skirts

O' the beech-wood.

Guen. Gone? All thwarts us.

Mil. Thorold too?

Guen. I have thought. First lead this Mildred to her room.

Go on the other side; and then we'll seek

Your brother: and I'll tell you, by the way,

The greatest comfort in the world. You said

There was a clue to all. Remember, sweet,

He said there was a clue! I hold it. Come!

ACT III

SCENE I.—THE END OF THE YEW-TREE AVENUE UNDER MILDRED'S WINDOW. A LIGHT SEEN THROUGH A CENTRAL RED PANE

Enter TRESHAM through the trees.

A GAIN here! But I can not lose myself.
The heath—the orchard—I have traversed glades
And dells and bosky paths which used to lead
Into green wildwood depths, bewildering
My boy's adventurous step. And now they tend
Hither or soon or late; the blackest shade
Breaks up, the thronged trunks of the trees ope wide,
And the dim turret I have fled from fronts
Again my step; the very river put
Its arm about me and conducted me
To this detested spot. Why then, I'll shun
Their will no longer: do your will with me!
Oh, bitter! To have reared a towering scheme
Of happiness, and to behold it razed,
Were nothing: all men hope, and see their hopes

Frustrate, and grieve awhile, and hope anew.
 But I — to hope that from a line like ours
 No horrid prodigy like this would spring,
 Were just as though I hoped that from these old
 Confederates against the sovereign day,
 Children of older and yet older sires,
 Whose living coral berries dropped, as now
 On me, on many a baron's surcoat once,
 On many a beauty's wimple would proceed
 No poison-tree, to thrust, from hell its root,
 Hither and thither its strange snaky arms.
 Why came I here? What must I do?

[*A bell strikes.*

A bell?

Midnight! and 't is at midnight — Ah! I catch —
 Woods, river, plains, I catch your meaning now,
 And I obey you! Hist! This tree will serve.

[*He retires behind one of the trees. After a pause, enter MERTOUN
 cloaked as before.*]

Mer. Not time! Beat out thy last voluptuous beat
 Of hope and fear, my heart! I thought the clock
 I' the chapel struck as I was pushing through
 The ferns. And so I shall no more see rise
 My love-star! Oh! no matter for the past!
 So much the more delicious task to watch
 Mildred revive; to pluck out, thorn by thorn,
 All traces of the rough forbidden path
 My rash love lured her to! Each day must see
 Some fear of hers effaced, some hope renewed;
 Then there will be surprises, unforeseen
 Delights in store. I'll not regret the past.

[*The light is placed above in the purple pane.*

And see, my signal rises, Mildred's star!
 I never saw it lovelier than now
 It rises for the last time. If it sets,
 'T is that the reassuring sun may dawn.

[*As he attempts to ascend the last tree of the avenue, TRESHAM arrests
 his arm.*

Unhand me — peasant, by your grasp! Here's gold.
 'T was a mad freak of mine. I said I'd pluck
 A branch from the white-blossomed shrub beneath
 The casement there. Take this, and hold your peace.

Tres. Into the moonlight yonder, come with me! —
 Out of the shadow!

Mer.

I am armed, fool!

Tres.

Yes,

Or no? You'll come into the light, or no?

My hand is on your throat—refuse!—

Mer.

That voice

Where have I heard — no — that was mild and slow. —

I'll come with you.

[*They advance.*]

Tres.

You're armed: that's well. Declare

Your name — who are you?

Mer.

Tresham? — she is lost!

Tres. Oh! silent? Do you know, you bear yourself

Exactly as, in curious dreams I've had

How felons this wild earth is full of look

When they're detected, still your kind has looked!

The bravo holds an assured countenance,

The thief is voluble and plausible,

But silently the slave of lust has crouched

When I have fancied it before a man.

Your name?

Mer.

I do conjure Lord Tresham — ay,

Kissing his foot, if so I might prevail —

That he for his own sake forbear to ask

My name! As heaven's above, his future weal

Or woe depends upon my silence! Vain!

I read your white inexorable face.

Know me, Lord Tresham!

[*He throws off his disguises.*]

Tres.

Mertoun!

[*After a pause.*]

Draw now!

Mer.

Hear me

But speak first!

Tres.

Not one least word on your life!

Be sure that I will strangle in your throat

The least word that informs me how you live

And yet seem what you seem! No doubt 'twas you

Taught Mildred still to keep that face and sin.

We should join hands in frantic sympathy

If you once taught me the unteachable,

Explained how you can live so, and so lie.

With God's help I retain, despite my sense,

The old belief — a life like yours is still

Impossible. Now draw!

Mer.

Not for my sake

Do I entreat a hearing — for your sake,

And most, for her sake!

Tres.

Ha, ha, what should I

Know of your ways? A miscreant like yourself,

How must one rouse his ire? A blow? — that's pride

No doubt to him ! One spurns him, does one not ?
Or sets the foot upon his mouth, or spits
Into his face ! Come ! Which, or all of these ?

Mer. 'Twixt him and me and Mildred, Heaven be judge !
Can I avoid this ? Have your will, my lord !

[He draws and, after a few passes, falls.]

Tres. You are not hurt ?

Mer. You 'll hear me now !

Tres. But rise !

Mer. Ah ! Tresham, say I not "you 'll hear me now ?"
And what procures a man the right to speak
In his defence before his fellow-man,
But — I suppose — the thought that presently
He may have leave to speak before his God
His whole defence ?

Tres. Not hurt ? It can not be !
You made no effort to resist me. Where
Did my sword reach you ? Why not have returned
My thrusts ? Hurt where ?

Mer. My lord —

Tres. How young he is !

Mer. Lord Tresham, I am very young, and yet
I have entangled other lives with mine.
Do let me speak, and do believe my speech !
That when I die before you presently —

Tres. Can you stay here till I return with help ?

Mer. Oh ! stay by me ! When I was less than boy
I did you grievous wrong and knew it not —
Upon my honour, knew it not ! Once known,
I could not find what seemed a better way
To right you than I took : my life — you feel
How less than nothing were the giving you
The life you 've taken ! But I thought my way
The better — only for your sake and hers :
And as you have decided otherwise,
Would I had an infinity of lives
To offer you ! Now say — instruct me — think !
Can you from the brief minutes I have left
Eke out my reparation ? Oh ! think — think !
For I must wring a partial — dare I say,
Forgiveness from you, ere I die ?

Tres. I do
Forgive you.

Mer. Wait and ponder that great word !
Because, if you forgive me, I shall hope

To speak to you of — Mildred !

Tres.

Mertoun, haste

And anger have undone us. 'T is not you

Should tell me for a novelty you 're young,

Thoughtless, unable to recall the past.

Be but your pardon ample as my own !

Mer. Ah ! Tresham, that a sword-stroke and a drop
Of blood or two should bring all this about !

Why, 't was my very fear of you, my love

Of you — what passion like a boy's for one

Like you? — that ruined me ! I dreamed of you —

You, all accomplished, courted everywhere,

The scholar and the gentleman. I burned

To knit myself to you ; but I was young,

And your surpassing reputation kept me

So far aloof ! Oh ! wherefore all that love ?

With less of love, my glorious yesterday

Of praise and gentlest words and kindest looks

Had taken place perchance six months ago.

Even now, how happy we had been ! And yet

I know the thought of this escaped you, Tresham !

Let me look up into your face ; I feel

'T is changed above me : yet my eyes are glazed.

Where? where?

[As he endeavours to raise himself, his eye catches the lamp.]

Ah, Mildred ! What will Mildred do ?

Tresham, her life is bound up in the life

That's bleeding fast away ! I'll live — must live —

There, if you'll only turn me I shall live

And save her ! Tresham — oh ! had you but heard !

Had you but heard ! What right was yours to set

The thoughtless foot upon her life and mine,

And then say, as we perish, "Had I thought,

All had gone otherwise?" We've sinned and die :

Never you sin, Lord Tresham ! for you'll die,

And God will judge you.

Tres.

Yes, be satisfied !

That process is begun.

Mer.

And she sits there

Waiting for me ! Now, say you this to her —

You, not another — say, I saw him die

As he breathed this, "I love her" — you don't know

What those three small words mean ! Say, loving her

Lowers me down the bloody slope to death

With memories — I speak to her, not you,

Who had no pity, will have no remorse,
 Perchance intend her — Die along with me,
 Dear Mildred ! 't is so easy, and you 'll 'scape
 So much unkindness ! Can I lie at rest,
 With rude speech spoken to you, ruder deeds
 Done to you ? — heartless men shall have my heart,
 And I tied down with grave-clothes and the worm,
 Aware, perhaps, of every blow — O God ! —
 Upon those lips — yet of no power to tear
 The felon stripe by stripe ! Die, Mildred ! Leave
 Their honourable world to them ! For God
 We' re good enough, though the world casts us out.

Tres. Ho, Gerard !

[*A whistle is heard.*]

Enter GERARD, AUSTIN, and GUENDOLEN with lights.

No one speak ! You see what's done.
 I cannot bear another voice.

Mer.

There 's light —

Light all about me, and I move to it.
 Tresham, did I not tell you — did you not
 Just promise to deliver words of mine
 To Mildred ?

Tres. I will bear those words to her.

Mer. Now ?

Tres. Now. Lift you the body, and leave me
 The head.

[*As they have half raised MERTOUN, he turns suddenly.*]

Mer. I knew they turned me : turn me not from her !
 There ! stay you ! there !

[*Dies.*]

Guen. [*After a pause*]. Austin, remain you here
 With Thorold until Gerard comes with help ;
 Then lead him to his chamber. I must go
 To Mildred.

Tres. Guendolen, I hear each word
 You utter. Did you hear him bid me give
 His message ? Did you hear my promise ? I,
 And only I, see Mildred.

Guen.

She will die.

Tres. Oh ! no, she will not die ! I dare not hope
 She 'll die. What ground have you to think she 'll die ?
 Why, Austin 's with you !

Aus.

Had we but arrived

Before you fought !

Tres.

There was no fight at all.

He let me slaughter him — the boy ! I 'll trust

The body there to you and Gerard — thus !
Now bear him on before me.

Aus. Whither bear him?

Tres. Oh ! to my chamber ! When we meet there next
We shall be friends. [*They bear out the body of MERTOUN.*]

Will she die, Guendolen?

Guen. Where are you taking me?

Tres. He fell just here.

Now answer me. Shall you in your whole life —
You who have nought to do with Mertoun's fate,
Now you have seen his breast upon the turf,
Shall you e'er walk this way if you can help?
When you and Austin wander arm-in-arm
Through our ancestral grounds, will not a shade
Be ever on the meadow and the waste —
Another kind of shade than when the night
Shuts the woodside with all its whispers up?
But will you ever so forget his breast
As carelessly to cross this bloody turf
Under the black yew avenue? That's well !
You turn your head : and I then? —

Guen. What is done

Is done. My care is for the living. Thorold,
Bear up against this burden : more remains
To set the neck to !

Tres. Dear and ancient trees

My fathers planted, and I loved so well !
What have I done that, like some fabled crime
Of yore, lets loose a Fury leading thus
Her miserable dance amidst you all?
Oh ! never more for me shall winds intone
With all your tops a vast antiphony,
Demanding and responding in God's praise !
Hers ye are now, not mine ! Farewell — farewell !

SCENE II. — MILDRED'S CHAMBER

Mil. [*alone*]. He comes not ! I have heard of those who
seemed

Resourceless in prosperity, — you thought
Sorrow might slay them when she listed ; yet
Did they so gather up their diffused strength
At her first menace, that they bade her strike,
And stood and laughed her subtlest skill to scorn.
Oh ! 't is not so with me ! The first woe fell,

And the rest fall upon it, not on me :
 Else should I bear that Henry comes not? — fails
 Just this first night out of so many nights?
 Loving is done with. Were he sitting now,
 As so few hours since, on that seat, we'd love
 No more — contrive no thousand happy ways
 To hide love from the loveless any more.
 I think I might have urged some little point
 In my defence to Thorold ; he was breathless
 For the least hint of a defence : but no,
 The first shame over, all that would might fall.
 No Henry ! Yet I merely sit and think
 The morn's deed o'er and o'er. I must have crept
 Out of myself. A Mildred that has lost
 Her lover — oh ! I dare not look upon
 Such woe ! I crouch away from it ! 'Tis she,
 Mildred, will break her heart, not I ! The world
 Forsakes me : only Henry's left me — left?
 When I have lost him, for he does not come,
 And I sit stupidly — O Heaven, break up
 This worse than anguish, this mad apathy,
 By any means or any messenger !

Tres. [Without]. Mildred !

Mil.

Come in ! Heaven hears me !

[Enter TRESHAM.]

You? alone?

Oh ! no more cursing !

Tres.

Mildred, I must sit.

There — you sit !

Mil.

Say it, Thorold — do not look

The curse ! deliver all you come to say !

What must become of me? Oh ! speak that thought

Which makes your brow and cheek so pale !

Tres.

My thought?

Mil. All of it !

Tres.

How we waded — years ago —

After those water-lilies, till the plash,

I know not how, surprised us ; and you dared

Neither advance nor turn back : so, we stood

Laughing and crying until Gerard came —

Once safe upon the turf, the loudest too,

For once more reaching the relinquished prize !

How idle thoughts are, some men's, dying men's !

Mildred, —

Mil.

You call me kindlier by my name

Than even yesterday : what is in that?

Tres. It weighs so much upon my mind that I
This morning took an office not my own !
I might — of course, I must be glad or grieved,
Content or not, at every little thing
That touches you. I may with a wrung heart
Even reprove you, Mildred ; I did more :
Will you forgive me ?

Mil. Thorold ? do you mock ?
Or no — and yet you bid me — say that word !

Tres. Forgive me, Mildred ! — are you silent, sweet ?

Mil. [*Starting up*]. Why does not Henry Mertoun come to-
night ?

Are you, too, silent ?

[*Dashing his mantle aside, and pointing to his scabbard, which is empty.*]

Ah ! this speaks for you !

You've murdered Henry Mertoun ! Now proceed !
What is it I must pardon ? This and all ?
Well, I do pardon you — I think I do.
Thorold, how very wretched you must be !

Tres. He bade me tell you —

Mil. What I do forbid
Your utterance of ! So much that you may tell
And will not — how you murdered him — but, no !
You'll tell me that he loved me, never more
Than bleeding out his life there : must I say
"Indeed" to that ? Enough ! I pardon you.

Tres. You can not, Mildred ! for the harsh words, yes :
Of this last deed Another's judge ; whose doom
I wait in doubt, despondency, and fear.

Mil. Oh, true ! There's nought for me to pardon ! True !
You loose my soul of all its cares at once.
Death makes me sure of him forever ! You
Tell me his last words ? He shall tell me them,
And take my answer — not in words, but reading
Himself the heart I had to read him late,
Which death —

Tres. Death ? You are dying too ? Well said
Of Guendolen ! I dared not hope you'd die :
But she was sure of it.

Mil. Tell Guendolen
I loved her, and tell Austin —

Tres. Him you loved :
And me ?

Mil. Ah, Thorold ! Was 't not rashly done

To quench that blood, on fire with youth and hope
 And love of me — whom you loved too, and yet
 Suffered to sit here waiting his approach
 While you were slaying him? Oh! doubtlessly
 You let him speak his poor confused boy's-speech —
 Do his poor utmost to disarm your wrath
 And respite me! — you let him try to give
 The story of our love and ignorance,
 And the brief madness and the long despair —
 You let him plead all this, because your code
 Of honour bids you hear before you strike;
 But at the end, as he looked up for life
 Into your eyes — you struck him down!

Tres. No! no!

Had I but heard him — had I let him speak
 Half the truth — less — had I looked long on him
 I had desisted! Why, as he lay there,
 The moon on his flushed cheek, I gathered all
 The story ere he told it; I saw through
 The troubled surface of his crime and yours
 A depth of purity immovable.
 Had I but glanced, where all seemed turbidest
 Had gleamed some inlet to the calm beneath.
 I would not glance: my punishment's at hand.
 There, Mildred, is the truth! and you — say on —
 You curse me?

Mil. As I dare approach that Heaven
 Which has not bade a living thing despair,
 Which needs no code to keep its grace from stain,
 But bids the vilest worm that turns on it
 Desist and be forgiven, — I — forgive not,
 But bless you, Thorold, from my soul of souls!

[*Falls on his neck.*]

There! Do not think too much upon the past!
 The cloud that's broke was all the same a cloud
 While it stood up between my friend and you;
 You hurt him 'neath its shadow: but is that
 So past retrieve? I have his heart, you know;
 I may dispose of it: I give it you!

It loves you as mine loves! Confirm me, Henry!

[*Dies.*]

Tres. I wish thee joy, beloved! I am glad
 In thy full gladness!

Guen. [*Without*]. Mildred! Tresham!

[*Entering with AUSTIN*]

Thorold,

I could desist no longer. Ah! she swoons!

That's well.

Tres. Oh! better far than that!

Guen. She's dead!

Let me unlock her arms!

Tres. She threw them thus

About my neck, and blessed me, and then died:

You'll let them stay now, Guendolen!

Aus. Leave her

And look to him! What ails you, Thorold?

Guen. White

As she, and whiter! Austin! quick — this side!

Aus. A froth is oozing through his clenched teeth;
Both lips, where they're not bitten through, are black:
Speak, dearest Thorold!

Tres. Something does weigh down

My neck beside her weight: thanks; I should fall

But for you, Austin, I believe! — there, there,

'T will pass away soon! — ah! — I had forgotten:

I am dying.

Guen. Thorold — Thorold — why was this?

Tres. I said, just as I drank the poison off,

The earth would be no longer earth to me,

The life out of all life was gone from me.

There are blind ways provided, the foredone

Heart-weary player in this pageant-world

Drops out by, letting the main masque defile

By the conspicuous portal: I am through —

Just through!

Guen. Don't leave him, Austin! Death is close.

Tres. Already Mildred's face is peacefuller.

I see you, Austin — feel you: here's my hand,

Put yours in it — you, Guendolen, yours too!

You're lord and lady now — you're Treshams; name

And fame are yours: you hold our 'scutcheon up. —

Austin, no blot on it! You see how blood

Must wash one blot away: the first blot came,

And the first blood came. To the vain world's eye

All's gules again: no care to the vain world,

From whence the red was drawn!

Aus. No blot shall come!

Tres. I said that; yet it did come. Should it come,

Vengeance is God's, not man's. Remember me! [*Dies.*

Guen. [*letting fall the pulseless arm*]. Ah! Thorold! we can
but — remember you!

